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· THE POEMS OF  
LEROY TITUS WEEKS

——Spend in all things else,  
But of old friends be most miserly.  
——JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

# THE POEMS

OF  
LEROY TITUS WEEKS

||

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Me imperturbe, standing at ease in Nature,  
Master of all, aplomb in the midst of irrational things.

—WALT WHITMAN



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## BIRD POEMS

Whar de branch runs google an' de leaves is green.  
—JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS



## ODE TO THE BOBOLINK

“Winkle-wankle-wonkle-winkle,  
Tee-a, tee-a, tump-tinkle,”  
So my tipsy bobolink’ll  
    Jubil all the day.  
“Rinklety-ranklety-rumple-rinkle,”  
Until night with starry twinkle  
    Stops his jingling lay.

Sweet is thy music, O wild little rover!  
Tumbling, glee-drunk, into billows of clover;  
Merry as Bacchus and sweet as Apollo,—  
Thy careless foot crumpling the lily’s corolla.  
    “Fink” . . . . . “Fink.”

“Inkle-y-, ankle-y, onkle-kinkle,”  
Teasing out the snarl and crinkle  
    Of the toiler’s brain;  
From a flaunting rag-weed teeter,  
With intoxicating meter,  
    Flows thy silver strain.

Sweet bird, I slip this yoke of toil!  
Though weeds may grow and crops may spoil,  
I hold the cares of life at bay  
To spend with thee this matchless day.  
Here in these meadows drowsed with bloom,

Edged round with lace from spider's loom,  
I sink into the arms of June  
As tired hands relax at noon,  
And let my heart be glad and free,  
While bobolink pours over me  
The pearls he drank in drops of dew,  
While stars were out, and morn was new.

“Joy! jollity! jubilee!  
Wirblety-warble, happy me!  
Rest and dream, O tired mortal;  
See! I push a secret portal,  
And let in a shining throng,  
Piping Nature's wonder song.”

“Pinklety-panklety-punkle-pinkle,”  
So his broken revels sprinkle  
O'er me till I catch the sweetness  
Of the season's rich completeness,—  
Till my soul escapes its keeper,  
Leaves the earth, and soars to deeper  
Vasts of light, by wing unaided,  
Where bird and earth are hushed and faded,

And upon my inner vision  
Breaks the glow of fields Elysian,  
While from hosts of The Eternal  
Comes the symphony supernal,  
And those songs I lisped and stuttered  
I hear again divinely uttered.  
A thrill of sweet emancipation!



A flash of blest transfiguration!  
Then slow I waken to the bird  
In meadows by wind-ripples stirred.

“Wifey, Wifey, come and see  
What I’ve built for you and me:  
A bridal palace by a willow,  
With blue-sky roof and cloud-down pillow;  
With sun-lace curtains at the door,  
And wind-wove carpets on the floor.  
I dreamed it all, and built it so  
With inspiring *tremolo*  
Of Love’s all-creative glee;—  
I sung it into life, you see.  
Whisper, whisper, went the breeze;  
(I coaxed it with my symphonies.)  
Whisper, whisper, went the dew;  
(It went because I sang of you.)  
Whisper, whisper, went the light,  
And whisper, whisper, all the night,  
The busy elves of earth and air;  
And whisper, whisper, everywhere,  
Those lips that breathe the breath of life:  
And, lo! all earth in beauty rife  
With love-forms to pleasure you.  
Linkle-lankle-lonkle-linkle,  
Rimple-y-rimple-y-rumple-rinkle,  
Fink . . . . . Fink.”

## THE SAUCY WREN

Merry-hearted little wren,  
In the honeysuckle,  
Nests again and sings again:  
“*Chuckle-chuckle-chuckle!*”

Oh, but he is full of fun!  
Oh, but he is airy!  
Like a dancing fleck o’ sun,  
Or a tipsy fairy.

Life is such a happy joke!  
Nesting is so jolly!  
Laughs until he has to choke—  
Prince of fun and folly.

Flitting through the trellis slats,  
Blowing vocal bubbles;  
With an eye on prowling cats,  
Sings away his troubles.

Little scamp! he stole my fruit;  
Snipped the reddest berry;  
Gave me saucy looks, to boot;  
That was naughty, very!

I stuck a scare-crow in the patch—  
Oh, but it was awful!

There he perched and sang a catch,  
And filled his little craw full.

Yes, and then he built his nest  
Under that old hat, sir;  
Perked his tail and did his best  
To warble, "Tit for tat, sir!"

Like him? I should say I do!  
He may *have* the berries.  
Fact—he only snips a few,  
And never touches cherries.

Put him up a little box,  
Anything that's handy,  
'Bout the vernal equinox—  
Empty can is dandy.

Place it where's a chance to hide  
From the English sparrow;  
Make the doorway not too wide—  
Inch is plenty narrow.

Screen it same as I do mine,  
In the tousled tangle  
Of the honeysuckle vine,  
Or some cosy angle.

He'll move in the first o' May,—  
Strew your porch with litter,—  
But pay his rent up every day  
With his merry twitter.

## THE SAUCY WREN

Merry-hearted little wren,  
With your happy chuckle,  
Come again and nest again  
In my honeysuckle!

## THE RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD

On a flaunting flag the red-wing swings,  
("Onk-o-lee!")

He dips and sways and tilts his wings  
To the rollicking south wind as he sings,  
"Ka-lonk-o-lee!

One, two, three,  
Nestlings hid where none can see.  
Ka-lonk-o-lee!"

In a button-bush or a tussock deep,  
("Onk-o-lee!")

Is the sly little nest where his babies sleep,  
While sheltering reeds their vigils keep.

"Ka-lonk-o-lee!  
Blithe and free,  
With June and sunshine I agree.  
Ka-lonk-o-lee!"

Oh, the Blue is bluer when he comes,  
("Lonk-a-lee!")

The bee in the maple blossom hums,  
The field and the lark again are chums.

"Ong-filla-ree!  
The waking lea  
Is sweet with the breath of Arcady.  
Ong-kulla-ree!"

The flags are aflame with his epaulet—  
    ("Klong-kulla-ree!")  
That sparkle of red on a jacket of jet;  
Oh, he is the summer-time's gay cadet!  
    "Ka-lonk-o-lee!  
    Spring's a-gee,  
From the Hudson down to the Oconee.  
    Ka-lonk-o-lee!"

As sweet as the lover's sweetest theme,  
    ("Glong-go-lee!")  
Are the shadowy pools in the loitering stream,  
Or the pond where the water-lilies dream.  
    "Ka-lonk-o-lee!  
    To Pan and me  
The reeds have willed their melody.  
    Ka-lonk-o-lee!"

When they meet for a sing in the wooing-time,  
    ("Jubilee!")  
'Tis the gurgle of water in joyous rhyme,  
Or the golden peal of a tuneful chime—  
    "Ka-lonk-o-lee!  
    What a jamboree  
We're havin' up here in the sycamore-tree!  
    Ka-lonk-o-lee!"

## THE CHICKADEE

The chickadee tilts,  
    On a sycamore bough.  
In cute little kilts  
The chickadee tilts,  
And merrily lilt  
    To his sweet little *Frau*;  
The chickadee tilts  
    On a sycamore bough.

The chickadee wears —  
    A cunning black cap.  
In all his affairs  
The chickadee wears,  
With genial airs,—  
    The dear little chap,—  
The chickadee wears  
    A cunning black cap.

The chickadee's song  
    Is "Chick-a-dee-dee."  
It is not very long.  
The chickadee's song;  
Not much in a throng,  
    But it satisfies me.

## THE CHICKADEE

The chickadee's song  
Is "Chick-a-dee-dee."

The chickadee nests  
In a hole in a tree.  
The cats are not guests  
Where the chickadee nests;  
No robber molests  
His little tepee.  
The chickadee nests  
In a hole in a tree.

The chickadee stays  
All the year round.  
On cold winter days  
The chickadee stays;  
The cat-bird delays  
Till daisies abound;  
The chickadee stays  
All the year round.



## THE WESTERN MEADOW-LARK

Welcome, dear bird, with your gay yellow breast,  
Your sweet song of cheer, and your snug little nest  
In a sly grassy tuft out there in the field,  
By a neat clover pergola deftly concealed.  
“Yanky-doo-*deedle*-doodle. Yank-*ee*-doodle-doodle.”

I wander through woodland where bloodroots are white;  
Hepaticas greet me, and that tiny sprite,  
Blue Johnny-jump-up, winks at the sky,  
Making love to the South Wind whispering by,

While in from the meadow there comes a clear note,—  
A mouthful of joy from Meadow-lark's throat.  
It adds to the beauty of flower and spray;  
And makes the gay season seem even more gay.  
“I can't say the last syllable.”  
“I can't say the last syllable.”

He changes the record, for variety's sake;  
O, it's any old tune, this jolly country-jake:  
From warbling on the wing like merry bobolink,  
To the banjo twang, with its plunk-a, plank-a, plink.  
“Thirteen kilowats. Thirteen kilowats.”  
“K-doodle, k-doodle, k-doodle.”

He tells what he thinks of modern free verse:  
 He calls it plain claptrap, or something worse;  
 He pricks their balloon with his sharp little needle:  
 "Tweedle-dum-tweedle. Tweedle-dum-tweedle!"

Once when his sweetheart refused a caress,  
 He pouted around in mimic distress;  
 He flirted his tail in a comical way,—  
 And I cocked my ear, and I heard him say:  
     "You're a little too particular!"  
     "You're a little too particular!"

Sometimes he pretends like he's at the race,  
 Starting his horse in the free-for-all pace;  
 And as the wheels go whirling by,  
 He sends him off with a jubilant cry:  
     "Let 'er go, Gallagher!"  
     "Let 'er go, Gallagher!"

And then, when the racers, with thundering speed,  
 Come down the home-stretch, his horse in the lead,  
 He shouts and hurrahs in triumphant delight,  
 A cloud-burst of joy, a pinch of dynamite:  
     "Oh! Gee-whillaker!"  
     "Oh! Gee-whillaker!"

When he sees me coming across the flat,  
 In my big tramp boots and my Boy Scout hat,  
 He sends me a greeting as warm as a kiss  
 In meadow-lark lingo, something like this:

"Doctor Weeks is my tillicum."

Doctor Weeks is my tillicum."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Tillicum, a Chinook word meaning pal.

## THE ROBIN

“Pillywink, pollywog, poodle, poodle,  
Pollywog, poodle, pillywink, pillywink,  
Poodle, poodle, pillywink, pollywog,  
Poodle, poodle.”

That’s the robin with his blithesome bugle,  
Filling the spring with gurgle, google.

“Jellaby, Jellaby, julep, mint julep,  
Julep, Jellaby, julep, Jellaby, julep,  
Sip, sip.”

“Ballyhoo, ballyhoo, hooligan, hooligan, silly, silly.”

## THE BLUE JAY

Ho, there, gay marauder,  
Rummaging the wood!  
Pompous self-applauder,  
Braggart and defrauder,  
Bold as Robin Hood.  
Saucy imp in white and blue,  
What's your title? Tell me true.  
Comes the answer sharp, metallic:  
"Smart  
Aleck!  
Smart Aleck!"

Impudent freebooter,  
Pirate of the grove,  
Scoffer and disputer,  
Harasser and looter,  
Everywhere you rove.  
Yet, from out that noisy throat,  
Often comes a liquid note:  
"Kickapoo,  
Peekaboo,  
Linkaloo,  
Inklepoo."

Then again he'll whisper,—  
Oh, but he is sly!

Like a happy vesper,  
You will hear the lisper  
    In the leaves near by,  
Crooning to his nesting mate  
Songs beyond me to translate:  
"Tear,  
    Tee,  
        Twink,  
            Twee!  
Room for two: just you——and me."

Here I lie a-soaking  
    In the scented shade,  
While he goes a-poking  
All about, and joking  
    Like a jolly blade.  
Then he'll order round his wife,  
With her busy, busy life:  
"Fill the kittle!  
    Fill the kittle!  
        Fill up the kittle!  
Fill the tea-kittle!"

Once I watched a robin  
    Plastering her nest.  
How she kept a-bobin'  
In and out and daubin',  
    Shaping with her breast.  
Jay bird came a-dancing by,  
And the dwelling caught his eye;—

Sucked the eggs and flew away!

“Jay!

Jay!

Jay!

Jay!”

## THE MARYLAND YELLOW-THROAT

In a willow by a brook,  
    (Wheety, wheety, wheety, wheety,)  
There I keep a picture-book;  
Would you like to take a look?  
Just a nest and nestlings sweet,—  
    (Wheety, wheety, wheety, wheet.)

In the water there you see  
    (Weechy, weechy, weechy, weechy)  
Snap-shots of my mate and me,  
Like a dream of Arcady,  
All too delicate for speech,—  
    (Weechy, weechy, weechy, weech.)

How d'you like my mask of black?  
    (Wichery, wichery, wichery, wichery,)  
How d'you like my yellow sack  
With its olive-tinted back?  
Made at *Nature's*, every stitch.  
    (Wichery, wichery, wichery, wich.)

Blithe and happy all the day,  
    (Weety, weety, weety, weety,)  
Here I lilt my roundelay,  
On this tilting willow spray.  
Oh, but nesting-time is sweet!  
    (Weety, weety, weety, weet.)



## THE EAGLE

See him come like a bolt! Hear his mighty wings rush,  
As he bursts through the cloud with a conquering  
scream!

How my heart throbs with joy! How my eager veins  
flush

As he flashes upon me, my own vital dream!

See him skeep through the air with his wings never  
stirred,

A thousand feet down from his home on the crag.

O, stout-hearted challenger! mountain-nursed bird!

Fit emblem art thou for The Bonny Blue Flag.

I have watched thee at battle, and have felt my own  
blood

Arouse to thine action with wild billowings

At the splendid display of thy trained hardihood

In a spasm of air and a whirlpool of wings.

O, bird of my county,

On the cliff thou art sentry

To welcome the morning, and warn of the night.

O, bird, how I love thee!

And how from above thee,

Around and below thee,

I feel thee and know thee—  
Baptized by one hand at the same font of light.

Together we've drunk at the morning's fresh fountain;  
Together we've fought out the storm on the mountain;  
We've heard it far under  
With rock-shaking thunder  
Bumping and butting away in its wrath,  
While lightnings have gleamed as from Vulcan's own  
forge,  
And the water-spout gored its way down to the gorge,  
Leaving the mountain scarred deep in its path.

How like to a man art thou—dauntless in danger!  
Land-lord, and sea lord, and lord of the air.  
I look in thine eyes, O, thou sky-roving ranger—  
The spirit of distance is slumbering there.

America mounts with thee, wide-awake, virile,  
Proud emblem of victory, soaring afar  
In widening circles, the infinite spiral,  
Where vision unbounded and liberty are.

## THE CARDINAL BIRD

The cardinal bird is a troubadour  
With a song for the young and the gay;  
With crest aflame in a wild amour  
From a bush at the peep of day,  
He calls to his mate in tones demure:  
"First o' May, my Dear, first o' May."

The symbol of blossom and summertime joy,  
He delights both the eye and the ear.  
When Spring sends him on as near chief envoy.  
He calls as he passes near,—  
"Ahoy, Sir! ahoy, Sir! ahoy, Sir! ahoy!  
What cheer? what cheer? what cheer?"

Along about four, on a summer morn,  
When the day begins to glow,  
And the dew glints on the knee-high corn,  
Then the birds strike up, ho, ho!  
And cardinal blows the leading horn:  
"Key-note, keeeey-note, do, do, do."

He eyes me askance, as I walk about  
His nest in the cedar tree;  
He tries many ways to put me to rout:  
He swells like a Spanish grandee,

Then skips here and there with a saucy shout :

“Puccachee ! you there, puccachee !”<sup>1</sup>

He romps through the trees with a wild hurrah,

When the eggs begin to pip ;

You’d think a star had broke in his craw,

Or he’d been to the sun for a dip ;

He bids all hands for a mad hurrah :

“Three cheers ! hip, hip, hip !”

His greedy little youngsters gourmandize

Till their bills will hardly shut ;

Grubs, and worms, and bugs, and flies,

They gobble, and cram, and glut,

Until you’ll hear his chiding cries :

“Ah, ah, children ! hut, tut, tut !”

“Hello, there, hello !” he seems to call,

“What makes mankind so poky ?

When wood, and stream, and field made call,

The Lord himself played hookey ?<sup>2</sup>

There goes a squirrel along on the wall,

Lookey ! Lookey ! Lookey !”

Thanks for the hint, my bonny, bonny bird ;

I saunter off to the wood ;

My heart with primal heat is stirred,—

And if I understood

What these old oaks say, word for word,

I’d join their brotherhood.

<sup>1</sup> Puccachee, skedaddle.

<sup>2</sup> See Mark vi, 31.

## BOB WHITE

Oh, sweet to the ear  
In the early morn  
Is the whistle clear  
Over rustling corn  
Of the brown little bird whose rich content  
Is a breath of life by summer sent.  
His gladness thrills  
The heart, and spills  
The laughter of nature over the hills.  
"Bob White!" "All right!"  
"O, Bob White!"

He sings of dells  
With rippling rain,  
Of tinkling bells  
In shady lane,  
Of sunburned cheek and sun-filled heart,  
Of joyous life in the fields apart.  
A true chevalier,  
He spreads good cheer,  
And the haunting dream of the Golden Year.  
"Bob White!" "True Knight!"  
"O, Bob White!"

Where leaves are aflame  
In the autumn air,

His trig little dame  
With wifely care  
Will gather her brood about her breast,  
As the sun dips low in the purple West,  
And lilt love's glee  
Across the lea—  
The deep, undying mystery:  
"Loyalty!" "Loyalty!"  
"Loyalty!"

## THE MOCKINGBIRD

Close hid in a shrinking mimosa,  
The mockingbird carols his glee.  
O, lover! O, sweet *amorosa*!  
I open my heart to thee.  
    Transcendent,  
    Resplendent,  
The moonlight is on the lea.

I creep to the vine-circled window;  
The lattice I silently push,  
Till in on me, worshiping Hindu,  
The sky-fire breaks with a rush.  
    Sky-fire,  
    Bird lyre,  
And night with her finger a-hush.

My spirit I bathe in the moonlight,  
That floats me afar and afar,  
Transfigured this glorious June night  
To mockingbird, melody, star.  
    O, spirit,  
    So near it,  
The portals of heaven unbar.

I steal o'er the lush, cool grasses,  
As slowly as creeps a shade;



I rise, and am hid in leaf masses,  
Where dryad and bird masquerade;  
And my soul  
Drinks the whole,  
Like the soul of a love-stricken maid.

So witching the notes are, so haunting!  
They echo through night's vast hall,—  
Illusive, eluding, and taunting,  
They swell, and they faint, and they fall.  
Full moon,  
Heart swoon,  
And the spell of the South over all.

Entranced, with my face in the leafage,  
I gather the rapture that rolls,  
As angels are gleaning the sheafage  
Of radiant, sanctified souls.  
Supernal!  
Eternal!  
I sight the Elysian shoals.

That moment of transfiguration,  
Almost I had captured the clew,  
The wonder, the magic creation  
Of symphony, sky-ladder, dew.  
O, singer!  
Life bringer!  
The world is created anew.



## ODE TO THE BROWN THRASHER

He gathers all the melodies  
That echo in the grove ;  
He holds the wealth of all sweet things  
There in his treasure-trove :—

The ripple of the rivulet,  
The trinkle of the rain,  
The purple of the sunset,  
The fragrance of the plain.

“Pickerel, pickerel, pickerel,  
Stickle-back, stickle-back,  
Sculpin, sculpin.”

Sweet chum of those rapturous days  
When I roamed the wide gardens of youth,  
When woodlands were peopled with fays,  
And people were angels, for sooth ;  
When my brow wore the evergreen bays,  
And fairy tales passed for the truth.

“Sibyllene, Sibyllene, Sibyllene,  
Apollo, Apollo,  
Hippocrene, hippocrene, hippocrene,  
Olympus, Olympus.”

We mated for life, we two,  
Back there when our hearts were free;  
We blended as summer winds do  
With vapors that rise from the sea;  
As rainbows will mingle with dew  
When moonlight is on the lea.

“Kittiwake, kittiwake, kittiwake,  
Curlew, curlew,  
Bobolink, bobolink, bobolink,  
Whippoorwill, whippoorwill.”

O singer of visions and dreams,  
What vistas of life you unfold!  
What music of murmuring streams,  
What wealth of Pactolian gold!  
Suggestions of ultimate gleams  
Where the Milky Way's glory is rolled.

“Aquarius, Aquarius, Aquarius,  
Alcor, Alcor,  
Orion, Canopus, Arcturus,  
Virgo, Virgo.”

You sing the deep secrets of God,  
Sweet child of the blossom and breeze!  
You have perched on the sacred tripod,  
And sucked with the Hyblaen bees;  
And you pour all that glory abroad  
Over meadowlands, fountains, and trees.

“Tickle-top, tickle-top, tickle-top,  
 Loblolly, loblolly,  
 Columbine, columbine, columbine,  
 Laurel, laurel.”

Like a poet, you mount in your singing,  
 From twig to twig, higher and higher,  
 Like incense to God upward winging,  
 Till my soul, from thy soul, catches fire,  
 And my own inner landscape is ringing  
 With notes from Israferi's lyre.

“Melba, Melba, Melba,  
 Gallicurci, Gallicurci,  
 Caruso, Nordica, Schalki.”

But sweetest, when daylight is done,  
 You descend again into the cover,  
 A twig at a time, till you've won  
 A perch by your mate, just above 'er,  
 Where you sing a song equaled by none  
 Ever poured in the ear of a lover.

“Butterfly, butterfly, butterfly,  
 Ladybird, ladybird,  
 Katydid, katydid, katydid.”

O Bird, when I lie in my tomb,  
 But come thou and lilt to me there,  
 And I will arise from its gloom

44      ODE TO THE BROWN THRASHER

To meet with thy song in the air ;  
Its rapture my life will relume,  
And we will eternity share.

“Armadillo, armadillo, armadillo,  
Gazelle, gazelle,  
Chickaree, chickaree,  
Antelope, antelope, antelope,  
Salamander, salamander, salamander,  
Nautilus, periwinkle, lemellibranch,  
Emerald, emerald,  
Farewell, farewell, farewell, farewell,  
Goodnight.”

DIALECT POEMS



## ALL 'AT'S OUT'S IN FREE

"Hide an' seek," 'r "I Spy!"  
Good ol' game of long ago!  
Keep your eye peeled like a cat!  
Git caught, ef you come pokin' slow.

Creep behind a locus' tree,  
'R in the wagon-box, 'r hide  
Under some ol' burdox clump,  
An' fin' a hen's nest there; 'r slide

Down the tater-hole an' spile  
Your new jeans pants, jes' made that day.  
'Member once, in tater time,  
I got a lickin' that-a-way.

Change coats, mebbby,—coats an' hats;  
Then scrooch behin' the picket fence  
So's to show up jest enough  
To fool the baseman; consequence,

He hollers, "One, two, three, fer Tom!"  
When it's me; an' nen we yell,  
An' whoop it up till he gits hot.  
A lot o' fun, I want to tell.

Makes my ol' heart tickle yit  
To think how me an' John an' Wall  
Went into the stable once,  
An' took a plank up in the stall,

An' crep' in under in the dark,  
Wheres nobody couldn't see,  
An' laid there till Al had to yell,  
"All 'at's out's in free!"

Hair's as white now as the snow  
'At piles up in an empty nes'.  
Don't do nothin' any more  
But set out here an' dream an' res';

With Addison, an' Frank, an' Cree,  
An' Lon, an' Olin hidin' there,  
Or us all scootin' fer the base,  
While shouts of laughter fill the air.

Then, one by one, those forms dissolve,  
Like happy dreams that I have known;  
The laughter dies out of the air,  
An' leaves me settin' here alone;

An', purty soon I'll slip away,  
An' hide fer good, where all is still,  
Among them marble slabs 'at stand  
Knee-deep in ferns on Folin's Hill.



An'—when the Jedgment Day comes by,  
An' last one they can't find is me,  
I hope I'll hear great Gabrul shout—  
“All 'at's out's in free!”

## MAH LI'L' SNOWBALL

What mek yo' hah so kinky,  
Mah li'l' Snowball?  
What mek yo' face so inkety?  
Now, Honey, don' you squall!

Yo' kinky hah, yo' inky face,  
Yo' li'l' stracted nose—  
Yo' cotch 'em f'm yo' daddy an'  
Yo' mammy, don' yo' spouse?

Yo' daddy's face ist lak a pot,  
An' mammy's blackah yit;  
An' bof dey hah as kinky  
As evah it kin git.

Den how you specs yo' dinky face  
Done gwine to happen white?  
I'll chuck you in de flouah ba'l  
An' keep yo' dah all night.

You want to be lak white folks!  
Chile, Ise ashamed o' you!  
I git a pillar, dat I will,  
An' beat yo' black an' blue!

White folks' houses full o' ghos'  
Wid yurs lak ol' ba'n do';  
An' big red tongues des lollin' out,  
An' draggin' on de flo'.

Dah now! dah now!  
Hootsy-tootsy, tuckahoe,  
Possum fat an' pone;  
Fiddle cuore de rh'umatiz—  
An' shake de rattle-bone

Lak angels trompin' in de dew,  
Whah sweetgum shadders fall.  
Sh!, mah pickaninny; sleep  
Mah li'l' Snowball!

Mockin' bird a-singing' sweet  
In de 'simmon tree.  
He say de angels gwine to come  
An' play wid you an' me.

Magnolia blossoms dreamin' down,  
Sleepy, s-l-e-e-p-y, sleep!  
Dahk a-comin' all aroun',  
Creepy, c-r-e-e-p-y, creep!

Huh! Whah yo' is, mah Honey, now?  
Mah pickaninny, whah?  
Is dat yo' eye a-shinin' yen?—  
Dat li'l winkin' stah?

I see you playin' on dat cloud.  
Mah honey, don' you fall!  
I wisht Ise wid you, playin' dah,  
Mah li'l Snowball.

## GOD'S OL' CLOTHES

I couldn't never seem to see  
    'At God don't wear ol' clothes.  
Sometimes he comes to visit me  
    In weeds an' things, an' those

Ol' leafy apurns Adam wore,  
    Clean back in Paradise;  
An' I jes' like 'im all the more,  
    The more he never tries

To strut into my tater patch,  
    When I'm a-hoein' there,  
With kid gloves on, an' duds to match  
    The rigs 'at princes wear.

I'm not a-sayin' God is poor,  
    An' hain't no royal robes;  
Much less I'm sayin' he's a boor,  
    An' likes a dress like Job's.

I've seen him wear a sunset coat,  
    With stars all down the front,  
An' little ones about the throat,  
    So fine you'd haf to hunt.

## GOD'S OL' CLOTHES

I've seen him wear a morning gown  
All glorious like the sun,  
An' on his head a royal crown  
Of clouds an' star-beams spun.

But, jes' the same, when he makes calls  
On Tom, an' Dick, an' Hal,  
He'll mebbby have on overalls,  
So's he can be a pal.

You see—God's always jes' like this:  
He speaks in your own tongue;  
You understand him like a kiss,  
Or some sweet song 'at's sung

By thrush or lark; or like *amens*,  
'At all folks understand.  
An' then, his garments always blen's  
With what is close at hand.

O, him an' *me?* *We* git along,—  
Especial in the woods,  
Where insect hum an' wood-thrush song,  
An' all poetic moods

Of leaf an' blossom, water sounds,  
An' silent spirit speech,  
An' shadders, all expounds  
What *He* intends to teach.

Out there we're brothers, him an' me,  
Conversin' heart to heart;  
Our suits are jes' the same, you see:  
You cain't tell us apart.

## GOD'S BACK DOOR

God don't offer me no "hand-out,"  
When I tramp to his back door ;  
Nur he doesn't make me stand out  
While I eat it, furthermore.

Asks me in ; an' calls me brother ;  
Sets me down to bread an' wine ;  
Doesn't touch his own lips, nuther,  
Till he puts the cup to mine.

All the ills by imps invented,—  
Meant to chafe, an' crunch, an' cramp,  
They melt away, an' I'm contented,  
When God owns me—me a tramp.

So the rich kin enter mounted,  
At the *port cosheer* before ;  
As fer me, I'll jes' be counted  
As a tramp at God's back door.



## PRIMITIVE STYLES

I went to call on God, one day,  
An' take some random notes.  
I thought I might accumulate  
Some fac's an' anecdotes.

I lingered long upon the mat,  
To move each grain of dust;  
I fixed my hair an' tie jes' so,  
Because I thought I must.

I trembled lest some awkward slip  
Should bring me in disgrace,  
Or lest some breach of etiquette  
Might banish me the place.

But what was my astonishment  
To find cobwebs galore,  
With wasp nests hangin' on the walls,  
An' rat-holes in the floor.

A snake was curled up on the bed,  
An', would you ever think?  
A mouse was in the flour bin  
A frog was in the sink;

The birds bathed in the finger bowl,  
An', when God went to eat,

The squirrels romped across the dish,  
An' mussed it with their feet.

Wy, all the kids in forty mile  
Jes' romped from room to room,  
Where wa'nt no curtain on the sash,  
An' never was a broom.

An' then the orchestra! My lan'!  
Some fiddled, an' some danced,  
While some played ragtime, jazz, an' sich,  
Jest any way it chanced.

God hasn't learned a single thing  
From all the fashion plates,  
Nur all the books on etiquette;  
Wy he contaminates

The rivers every time it rains,  
An' don't apologize;  
He hatches skeeters, too, my sakes!  
An' never swats the flies.

I sauntered on into the woods,  
Where he was hivin' bees;  
An' when they swarm, he lets 'em go  
Wherever they dern please.

When twilight came with whisperin' feet,  
An' stars were interdooced,  
He didn't do a single thing  
To put his birds to roost.

But, shucks! Ise jest a-jokin' like;  
I wouldn't think it nice  
To stan' around a-faultin' God,  
An' givin' Him advice.

I fess I like his unschooled ways  
Where Style don't bullyrag,  
An' make you dance like wooden apes,  
When Simon says "wig-wag."

There ain't no other bed, I guess,  
Where I can sleep as sweet  
As right here where's no pillow-slip,  
No coverlet nor sheet.

You want to know the secret here,  
Where Jumbledom is rife?  
I figgered out the code one day,  
An' what I read was—LIFE!

## CHOKED ON SAND

Once, when I was jest a kid,  
We found a ground-bird's nest, we did.  
They held their mouths up trustin', and  
John Dawson filled them up with sand.

The brutal brat thought it a joke  
To see them nestlings gulp and choke.

O, yes, I know it is the law  
That birds must have sand in the craw;  
But there's a counter law that saith:  
On too much sand they choke to death.

I'm older now, an' gittin' gray;  
And yit, on many a hungry day,  
I've held my mouth up trustin', and  
Have gulped and choked on jest dry sand.

## MOTHER EARTH

I jes been layin' wake a spell  
A-sympathizin' with the folks  
'At swelters in close rooms, while here  
The night is gentle, an' these oaks

Are breathin' cool breaths through their leaves  
Like fairies strewin' poppies deep  
About my bed, an' soothin' me  
Jes right fer droppin' off to sleep.

I trail my hand out on the grass;  
Or lay a-lookin' at the moon,  
An' thinkin' of ol' friends 'at's dead;  
Or list'nin' to the night's soft croon,

While, off somewhere, a mockin' bird  
Is breakin' out in rills o' song:  
Jes sprinklin' all the night with pearls,  
An' sowin' dream-seed all along.

I'm glad they hev their nightingales  
Across the ocean, sky-larks, too,  
'At climbs the stairways o' the air,  
An' lose theirselves up in the Blue.

You don't ketch me a-braggin' roun'  
Jes cause I beat some other chap,  
An' hev a better house or barn,  
Or hoss or cow, or tater crap.

One glory of the nightingale,  
Another glory of the lark;  
But when the mockin'bird strikes up,  
Let foreign birds jes stop an' hark.

There's sort o' medicine, I low,  
'At comes from layin' on the ground,—  
Like cuddlein' in your mother's lap,  
Where we all used to sleep so sound.

So, on the groun's the place fer me,  
With some big oak a-sayin' then:  
"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ  
Be with you evermore. Amen."

An' last I'll sleep here *in* the ground,  
Till that bright dawn when time is done,  
I'll find *Him* tappin' at my door,  
An' sayin' soft,—"Wake up, my son."

## THE ANT AND THE GRASSHOPPER

When God an' me was loafin' once,  
The ant came bustlin' past,  
An' sneers, "If all did that-a-way,  
Where'd this world land at last?"

God looked 'im over quite a spell,  
An' then says, "Hully Gee!"  
An' turned his back on the busy ant,  
An' came an' sat by me.

An', O, we hev such bully times,  
Jes' him an' me alone.  
We don't talk much, but watch the birds,  
Or listen to the drone

Of crickets purrin' in the grass  
Till peace fills all the air,  
An' comes an' nestles in our hearts  
To bide forever there.

I'll mebbby find his hand on mine  
In Mother's gentle way;  
Jes' fillin' me with happiness  
'At words can't never say.

An' so we've wandered, Him an' me,  
Through many a spring an' fall,  
Till, of the many chums I've known,  
God's closest one of all.

An' when I come away at last,  
Down through the changein' year,  
He grips my hand, an' says to me,  
"You'll always find me here."

I'm gray-haird now, an' only wish  
I'd left the ants to plod,  
An' spent more time out in the woods,  
Jes' loafin' there with God.



## FRENCH FORMS



## I'LL PADDLE IN PUDDLES NO MORE

(virelai nouveau)

I'll paddle in puddles no more;  
The ocean lies luring before.

I leap to the boat and the oar;  
I push from the shoal and the shore.  
There waits me my ship of the line;—  
O, welcome the roll and the roar!  
And welcome the sea-birds that soar,  
The surge and the smell of the brine!  
I'll paddle in puddles no more.

Like draughts of a long-treasured wine  
That tingles my frame to the core;  
Like mountain air scented with pine,  
It kindles my heart to explore,—  
To knock, and unlock every door  
Where Wisdom and Beauty keep store.  
Like a smile of the Presence Divine,  
The ocean lies luring before.

From foot-rope to spanker-sheet pour  
The seas with their gleaming phosphor;  
I lean from the yard-arm before,  
While the dashing spray, fresh and saline,

68      I'LL PADDLE IN PUDDLES NO MORE

Drives home to my heart through each pore.  
I chant from the primeval score,  
With my fathers, the vikings of yore.  
I'll paddle in puddles no more.

With rapture I watch my prow gore  
Its way to the land where I swore  
To plant a victorious ensign.  
O, soul of me, never repine!  
Be it north in the polar seas frore,  
Or where the hot tropic suns shine  
Ablaze perpendicular o'er,—  
The spirit of emprise be mine!  
The ocean lies luring before;  
I'll paddle in puddles no more.

WHEN FIRST WE MET  
(roundel)

When first we met, an influence sweet,  
Like scent of rose with dew-drops wet,  
Breathed on my heart, that quicker beat,  
When first we met.

My hands I fill, to pay my debt,  
With coin stamped in Love's furnace heat,  
And with Love's superscription set.

And here, safe housed in love's retreat,  
I bless the unseen power yet,  
That stayed by thee my wandering feet,  
When first we met.

DEEP IN THE WOOD  
(a rondeau)

Deep in the wood I love God best ;  
There I am his distinguished guest.  
    There glows the primal stamp of *good* ;  
    There moves the elemental mood  
Wherein my soul finds every quest.  
I live full life, supremely blest ;  
    No dissipating imps intrude  
        Deep in the wood.

The "Open secret" manifest,  
Or through far vistas sweetly guessed,  
    Beams forth from leaf or saw-log rude ;  
    All things with hallowed eyes are viewed,  
        Deep in the wood.

## A RONDELET

A rondelet:  
The best of wine in purest gold.  
A rondelet:  
A star-beam caught in music's net;  
A crystal thought in beauty's mould;  
Your eyes, my Love, deep in them hold  
A rondelet.

## A TRIOLET

I took just a kiss,  
But her lips would repeat.  
What rapture! what bliss!  
I took just a kiss.  
You see, it's like this:  
"With what measure ye mete—!"  
I took just a kiss,  
But her lips *would* repeat.

## THE CRITIC

I tweedle-lee-leed,  
And I twoodle-loo-looed.  
The critics decreed,  
So I tweedle-lee-leed.  
They're a Lilliput breed,  
But they have to be wooed,  
So I tweedle-lee-leed,  
And I twoodle-loo-looed.

## TOO LATE

I would bid her forgive,  
But the grave lies between us.  
Like wine in a sieve,  
(I would bid her forgive)  
Is the life that we live,—  
Like a transit of Venus.  
I would bid her forgive,  
But the grave lies between us.

## THE VANISHED DREAM

I had a sweet dream,  
But it vanished with morning.  
How fair did it seem!  
I had a sweet dream;  
'Twas a heavenly beam  
My dark life adorning.  
I had a sweet dream,  
But it vanished with morning.



## SESTINA

"The very acme of metrical ingenuity."  
—Johnson, "Forms of English Poetry."

In May all magnets point to Hope,  
And every throat will sing a song.  
There's not a soul may droop and mope,—  
Each has the earth and sky for scope,  
In which to try his pinions strong,  
That are tethered in the throng.

With bees and blooms the meadows throng;  
The south wind sings a song of hope,  
That urges us with impulse strong  
To join in Nature's wonder-song,  
That has all realms of life for scope,  
Where never heart should pine or mope.

All winter long trees seemed to mope;  
But now, like some embattled throng,  
Their branches push to wider scope,  
And burgeon in victorious hope,  
While nesting birds pour out their song  
In streams of rapture sweet and strong.

The rivers swell with current strong,  
That icy fetters forced to mope;  
The rills join in the waking song;  
The rain-clouds all, a happy throng,  
Are pouring down melodious hope  
Of summer days and sun-lit scope.

The pupa, in its narrow scope,  
Has felt the life-urge deep and strong,  
And struggles with a glowing hope  
No more, a worm, to creep and mope,  
But soon to join the soaring throng,  
A living dream of summer song.

In May each heart will sing its song  
Of ampler vision, broader scope,  
Where all our loves and dreams shall throng,  
And life's great ocean, full and strong,  
Shall drown all fiends that lag and mope,  
And every lip shall whisper—"Hope!"

O, white-winged Hope, with angel song!  
Let sluggards mope, we crowd thy scope  
With pulses strong, a joyous throng.

## SONNETS





## A DOUBLE STAR

Give me Love's password—fearless I'll face God.  
Love spoke the word that roused the primal soul;  
It freed the Son of Man from death's control.  
All paths of life its happy feet have trod:  
Love dons the wooden shoe to moil and plod,  
It crowns Madonna with the aureole,  
By every hovel takes its golden toll,  
And walks the royal court in velvet shod.

Two lovers be who drank pain to the lees,  
Yet o'er all lovers else exalted are;  
Twin luminaries in the heaven, these,  
In Love's bright galaxy a double star:  
And when Love softly whispers—"Heloise!"  
The firmament reechoes—"Abelard!"

## FOUR SONNETS ON PEACE

### I—NATURE IN REPOSE

A heron dreaming lone in peaceful pool,  
Where twilight clouds are glassed in purple pile;  
A dewy sense of night in woodsey aisle,  
While, faint and far, from cloisters dim and cool,  
Come mellow chimes, like angel voice at Yule.  
Ten thousand whispered charms of peace beguile  
The cares of day, and hush with gentle wile  
Those strident voices that our souls befool.

In sweet content, a homeward flock of sheep  
Lag lazily along yon country lane,  
Like phantoms on some far Lethean shore.  
Night comes and lulls her weary world to sleep:—  
Tucks in the covers, crooning low refrain,  
Then tiptoes out and softly shuts the door.

### II—SLEEP

I put the day aside; prepare for sleep.  
I choose some book, and, filled with its delight,  
I'm mellow for the dreams of coming night.  
Delicious hints of slumber tinge the deep,  
Sweet silence, while the evening shadows creep  
In ever denser fold. Some gentle sprite  
Is tangling all my thoughts in merry spite,  
While lotos lanquors all my senses steep.

Day's tumult dies away to soft Amen,  
And leaves no ferment in my melting mind,  
As, like some craft afloat on seas profound,  
I drift away in blindfold chance, and then  
Some dream-mesh holds me close entwined;  
I gently sink away; in sleep I'm drowned.

### III—WORLD PEACE

O, purblind world! where selfishness doth reign,  
Distorting heaven's dream with hell's nightmare!—  
High heaven's dream of peace, forever fair,  
With hell's nightmare of war and its dark train.  
'Twas selfishness that prompted Tubal Cain,  
That scattered curses from Medusa's hair,—  
Flung wide Pandora's box to spread despair,  
And lost us Paradise for sordid gain.

Heal selfishness—then comes Millennium!  
When sword shall rust in scabbard, all forgot,  
And men be cursed no more with war's disease.  
Then earth shall teem with sweet life's busy hum,  
And all the world, from throne to lowly cot,  
Confess his gentle rule—The Prince of Peace.

### IV—THE PEACE OF GOD

The peace of God that passeth understanding—  
Allwhere it floats, in reach of every soul;  
A peace as of some vast stream's tranquil roll,  
Where faith finds landing after golden landing,  
With life's horizons evermore expanding,  
While love, by giving love, achieves its goal.  
'Tis like the power of earth's magnetic pole,  
That holds all compass needles in commanding.

The peace of God—it is the five-fold sea,  
Where dewdrop, tear drop, brook and river meet,  
And will of each is merged in will of all.  
O, all-engulfing peace, that makes us free,  
Yet binds us all in brotherhood complete—  
Let thy warm mantle on our shoulders fall.

## TO GEORGE FOX COOK

Immortalized in amber, here I hold

A bright-winged hummer of some summer night.  
Our friendship, too, my Friend, has been a bright  
And joyous cruiser of the air on wings of gold,  
Since those far days when first your heart unrolled  
Its wealth of manhood to my happy sight.  
Rich fellowship we have, and deep delight,  
As ever sweeter pages to our eyes unfold.

In this my sonnet I would thus imbed

And save our friendship from decay of years.  
For in our friendship we have been the peers  
Of Jonathan and David. Mighty dead  
On high Gilboa! with you we dare to vie:  
We've tasted friendship, too, my friend and I.



## TO MY MOTHER

“She hath done what she could,” the angels say  
Each night, and close the books whose pages shine  
With records of thy deeds, dear Mother mine.  
Thy faith by works is shown each golden day;  
And thy rich life, not lived for cheap display,  
Shall move by silent force of peace and light,  
Unseen by earth’s blind eyes; by faith, not sight;  
Shall pass through life to heaven’s eternal day.

One day a mother-bird had left her brood,  
And spread her wings for the eternal flight.  
You came and hovered them; made them your own;  
You taught them song and perch, and gave them food;  
You led them with the lark to fields of light,—  
With much left to be told before God’s throne.

## THE NORTH POLE

(To Captain Peary, April 6, 1909)

Since Gaea sprang from Chaos, here alone  
I've watched and yearned, a diuturnity,  
Across the snow, across the ice-bound sea,  
Whose frigid lips in dead'ning monotone,  
Repeat forevermore one dreary moan.  
I've watched till dynasties of gods grew old,  
Till hearts of burning stars were cinders cold,—  
Have yearned for Man to loose my virgin zone.

At last he came; no more am I forlorn;  
His footprints are like kisses on my face!  
This day shall stand alone, like that rare morn  
On which the great god Mercury was born.  
Let Time now drag till doom in weary pace!  
This kiss eternity shall not erase.

## EGO

Why, stripped of joy, and with my heart burned out,  
Do I still fare adown life's dusty road?  
Why not turn on the driver with his goad,  
And crash through walls that hedge me all without?  
I marvel that my soul doth pule and doubt,  
And falter, yea, and palter with the tomb,  
As though its chill, and damp, and gloom  
Could deepen pains that swathe me here about.

I *am* Somebody! That explains the case.  
I'd rather be a star that's lost in space,  
That eye or telescope shall find no more,—  
I'd rather move forevermore alone,  
Howe'er my wand'ring soul might writhe and moan,  
Than lose this conscious EGO at the core.

## MY ANCESTRY

Through all this westward push, three hundred years.  
They've poured along that rushing human flood  
That furnishes the muscle, bone, and blood  
Of great Columbia's band of volunteers.  
Long used to victory o'er foes and fears,  
And all that enervating devil's brood  
That thrive on downy beds and dainty food,—  
Oak-backed, storm-tried, stout-hearted pioneers.

So, through their veins, there comes to me at last  
A blood enriched by sun, and earth, fresh air,  
And rhythmic rills, and ocean's endless roar;  
Of prairie lands, and woods, and all the vast  
Of Freedom's bloom and fruit from every shore.  
This makes me kin to all that's good and fair.

## MY BETROTHED

When I was young, and lived in realms of air,  
I pledged myself to Life, and wreathed her head  
In garlands of the amaranth, and said  
The morning should forever bathe her hair  
In glory of the rising sun. "I swear  
That through all labyrinths my soul shall thread  
Her way," I said, "to thee, O, Life, and wed  
At last with thee, forever young and fair."

And right was I, though life be not the dream  
That once I saw through youth's kaleidoscope.  
Thou changest as the ever-changing sea,  
But ever doth thy face diviner seem;  
And I have kept my vow, and claim my hope  
To wed, O, Life, Eternal Life, with thee.

## THE SACRIFICE

I went up to the mount with breaking heart  
To sacrifice my soul's one child, my love.  
"Oh, God!" I cried; I could not look above.  
"Oh, God!" I prayed; and in my soul the smart  
Of rending roots that bled at every start;  
Of rending web that Love's bright fingers wove.  
"Oh, God! Oh, God!" and evermore I strove  
To feel my will of his wise will a part.

"Oh, God! I sacrifice my only child!  
It came from thee, and to thee shall return.  
My will with thy high will is reconciled."  
Within I felt love's altar fires burn  
All self away; and from the ashes came  
A deathless love, like heaven-transcending flame.

## MY TWO PAY MASTERS

One master pays me forty cents an hour.

I thank him; take my coins and go my way  
Right glad that I can hand, at close of day,  
Four dollars, cream of brain and muscle power,  
Into the keep of her, the sweetest flower  
That ever rooted in this common clay.  
With these I halo love, and hold at bay  
The ravening wolves of want that skulk and cower.

My other Master slips into my hand

Those precious pennies each of us must hold,  
When, at The Gate, the angel claims his toll.  
In that great Day these pennies shall expand  
Unto eternal values, wealth untold,  
While those four dollars slip from my control.

## THE ALL-ENGULFING LOVE

One time my father's farm was all of space.  
"As big as Father's farm!"—there fancy curbed.  
But soon my little circles were disturbed;—  
Horizons widened on and on apace,  
Till comets, yea, and light, lagged in the race,—  
Yea, till creation's bounds at last reverbed  
With crying of my soul, still urged, perturbed,  
To find an end to this horizon chase.

The stars and suns are incidental motes  
That float in the eternity's vast span  
That still shall be when stars shall all remove.  
Eternity is but a thought that floats  
Upon the ocean of the soul of Man,—  
And, gulping Man's soul is this woman love.



## THE MARATHON

My heart has life and love; my limbs have youth.  
To rear! ye blood-hounds—Failure, Age, and Death!  
Away, ye niggards, skimping blood and breath!  
Hurrah! lungs drink the air; feet gulp, forsooth,  
The flying miles. Farewell, thou ancient sleuth,  
Whose eye is on each trail; who listeneth  
For every heart-beat, Time, whose false tongue saith  
The sands he pours are each a dragon's tooth.

Far winds the Marathon, with cliffs to climb,  
With gulfs to leap; with quick-sands, marsh, and  
flood.

Off, every weight that keeps me from the fore!  
O, Life and Love, with all your train sublime!  
With you to stir youth's whirlpools in my blood,  
I speed along the blue Aegean shore.

## BE BOLD!

“Be bold! Be bold! and evermore be bold!”  
It is indeed “most strange that men should fear.”  
Place lance in rest, and foes will disappear,  
When down the lists the thundering clouds are rolled  
From hoof of steed by dauntless heart controlled.  
Damnation waits the man whom fears deform,  
While heaven yields to him who takes by storm,  
Ere vast eternity’s dread doom is tolled.

Let who will people all the dark with ghosts;  
Wher’er I sleep the sky-built ladders rise.  
I scan the mountainside, and, lo, the hosts  
Of the Omnipotent break on my eyes.  
Be bold, faint heart, and plague of fears will cease.  
Where bold heart is, there nests the dove of peace.

## ORPHEUS TO EURYDICE

Where art thou, O my lost Eurydice?

Without thee all the charms of earth are naught;  
The soul-expanding space for thee was wrought;  
The life-flushed hills and many-sounding sea  
Are merely settings to exhibit thee.

My dumb, neglected harp lies there unstrung,  
And in my heart one mournful dirge is sung:  
"Eurydice! my lost Eurydice!"

Thy garments blew against me from behind;  
Thy step was close; thy breath was on my hair;  
I panted! fought to rule mine eyes! grew blind  
Of soul, forgot and turned, O, mad despair!  
To see the mists of Orcus gulping thee,  
And with thee all but grief, Eurydice!

## DEATH AND RESURRECTION

Two sonnets

### I—DEATH

The vapors die from out the restless sea,—  
From turmoil, tumult, cold; from blinding storms  
That threaten death; they die into the forms  
Of beauty found in dew-drop on the lea,  
Of life that glows in leaf and fruit; in free  
And winged clouds, in rainbow pledge, in swarms  
Of joyous blooms that hail the sun, that warms  
The earth into full day, while shadows flee.

Oh, glorious death! to be forevermore  
A messenger of life, and not of death!  
Oh, glorious death! to mingle with the breath  
Of all the incense that the spring may pour!  
To be a veil across the sunset drawn,  
Or wreathed about the golden brows of dawn.

## II—RESURRECTION

Since first a seed was ripened in its cell,  
Since first a seed fell into earth's dark keep,  
And knew the biting chill of wintry sleep,  
Spring has returned and broken death's dark spell,  
And tossed its drifts of bloom in every dell;  
Has come with resurrection's glorious sweep,  
As moon draws every drop in all the deep,  
Or night doth myriad twinkling stars compel.

"Watch me!" I think I hear God's word of love;  
"See how I bury this reluctant seed  
In darksome bosom of the greedy grave.  
If I can make its leaves and petals wave  
In new and radiant life, does it not prove  
That I can resurrect a man at need?"

## MY SHIP CAME IN

The wharf I tramped for lo these many years,  
In watching for my ship to climb the verge,  
And plow its way to me through roaring surge,  
With cargo rich to pay up all arrears,  
And rank me safe for aye among the peers.  
One sunset, lo! a bark whose full sails urge  
Across those waves that purpling sunbeams purge;  
And straight to where I stand the pilot steers.

I mount the plank with self-important stride,  
And wave to those on shore with deep content.  
I walk *my* deck, exult, breathe victory's breath.  
Then, lo! from fading shores behind, I ride  
To brightening shores whereon my eyes are bent.  
"Ho! Pilot, say—what haven's this?" "'Tis  
Death!"

## AFTER DEATH

What was I in that busy work-day world?  
I was a cloud about the brows of dawn,  
A breath of life to temples worn and wan;  
I was the perfume in the rosebud furled,  
A cooling wave o'er sun-kissed pebbles purled,  
An echo of sweet voices long since gone;  
I was the song that soothed the dying swan,  
The dancing life in every young heart whirled.

I learned the knack of living all of life;  
I turned the body's loss to spirit's gain.  
I steadily avoided place and pelf.  
I lived and loved, and had no time for strife.  
I leaned hard on the hand that smote in pain,  
And moved forevermore away from self.

## TO MY PIPE

The curling clouds, like friendly genii,  
Float dreamily in many a graceful fold,—  
Dispart, unite, build mountains, windy wold,  
Suggest still waterfalls, the sea, the sky,  
And misty dawns with larks and thrushes nigh.  
Sweet reveries enwrap me: stories old  
Of Red Man in his wigwam, cunning, bold,  
Of Black Man singing where his loved ones lie.

The fire burns low, and midnight lends its charm,  
A restful charm that Letheward invites.  
Life is no more a garment rent and seamed;  
A halo, live an angel's fending arm,  
Or like the shining shields of Arthur's knights,  
Surrounds me here. Heigh-ho! I slept and dreamed.



THERE'S BUT ONE MORNING FOR THE  
ROSE OF LIFE

You brushed the dew from off a rose this morn;  
This day shall know that beaded work no more.  
Tomorrow 'twill be there again; a score  
Of happy neighbors in the rustling corn  
Will add their beauty to the beauty shorn  
On yesterday; but that fine touch it wore,  
As lips wear their first kiss,—its life is o'er,  
And never shall that beauty be re-born.

There's but one morning for the rose of life,  
O maiden fair! O youth with burning heart!  
And sweet will be that rose, and sweet life's day,  
If far into the noon the dew be rife  
On all those glowing petals; but no art  
Can bring it back, when once 'tis brushed away.

## “THE BLUES”

My Mother's blue eyes! blue sky, blue Flag, blue sea!

“The blues?” O, fair blue sea, O, Bonny Blue  
Flag!

World-clasping Blue, with edge beyond the crag

Where morning first her coming paints in glee!

All blues are fair and beautiful to me.

I cannot get “the blues.” I cannot drag

My spirit in the dust. Like some proud stag

That spurns the rocks, leaps many a fallen tree,

Swims lakes, outruns the wind, calls danger friend;

So stands my soul on threshold of each day,

And welcomes whate'er God sees fit to send.

My faith is:—God lets nothing go astray.

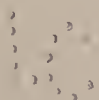
O, who will wrap himself in clouds of gloom,

When sun enough will make the granite bloom?

## SISYPHUS

When first I heaved this boulder up of old,  
I laughed whene'er it, baffling all my skill,  
Careened, escaped my clutch, and crashed down hill  
With echoing plunge. Aye unperturbed I rolled  
It up again. My heart was not yet cold;  
My thews were young, my hopes of iris sheen.  
I heaved and tugged in joyous faith serene  
That o'er the crest I yet would see it bowled.

But! yonder in the vale my boulder lies.  
My heart is under it. Yet, once again  
I gird me for the goal. My soul defies  
Defeat! I drag my burden from the fen  
Of submerged hopes, and now once more I rise  
Anear the rim. My boulder sways, and then—



## SHEPHERDING THE FOLD

(As Rector of Trinity Parish, Emmetsburg, Iowa.)

Each night my heart goes shepherding the fold,  
And tucks the tired flock up, one by one,  
For darkling hours that wait the morning sun;  
With peace of God I shelter young and old,  
And leave no stray neglected in the cold.  
With loving care this nightly task is done,  
While through my prayers each name is fondly run,  
As beads by holy men are softly told.

And then, sometimes, as in far Galilee,  
I, too, hear sudden whir of angel wings,  
While *glorias* from heavenly choir float down.  
Through vistas bright, that guiding star I see,  
While soul within me leaps and sings,  
And on my head I feel the circling crown.

## OCTOBER PEACE

No peace of June like this October peace :  
The year's best wine saved up until this last.  
The storm and stress of spring is overpast,  
And bulging bins tell tales of ripe increase.  
In every hillside grove the Golden Fleece  
Hangs with its wealth of color richly massed,  
While purple, scarlet, yellow, in contrast,  
Illuminate this Nature's masterpiece.

My soul lies fallow to these peaceful skies,  
And mixes with the landscape's quiet brown,  
Where summer's fruitage ripens to the Fall.  
The season floods me through my drinking eyes,  
Till in its glories all old sorrows drown,  
And I surrender : sweet October's thrall.

## TAPESTRIES

No man may look upon Jehovah's face  
And live. Wherefore Jehovah weaves the screen  
Of nature: landscape rich in boskage green,  
The labyrinthine deeps of starry space,—  
Kaleidoscopic wonder-world, to trace  
Suggestions of the Mind that works unseen,  
Behind these tapestries of Man's demesne,  
Where looms of God their marvels weave apace.

What mystic runes are on this puzzled page!  
What hinted meanings hidden in each line!  
All harmonies, all raptures of sweet sound,  
Dissolving views in stately equipage—  
Just patterns wherein God his works divine  
Suggests to Man, in all their deeps profound.

## HAWTHORNE

A lonely soul of other days and race ;  
A dweller in the dim, unhappy past ;  
A dreamer of weird dreams whose phantoms cast  
Cold shadows overthwart the world's gray face ;  
A builder with a magic touch and grace  
As delicate as frost-work ; unsurpassed  
In turning search-lights on the starless vast  
Of pain, then setting all in time and space.

Man's conscience was to him a bleating lamb ;  
Man's soul a wandering bird in bleakest storm.  
And yet, to keenest eye, there ever swam,  
In mystic dusk above, a heavenly form,  
That waved aside life's painful sham,  
And showed the homing dove, safe, safe, and warm.

## TO JOHN BURROUGHS

O, rich in all the happy woodland lore!  
Thou hast a friend in every leafy bay  
To lure thee from the cares of life away,  
And touch thee with their power to restore.  
The cloud of witnesses that sing and soar,  
That nest, and chirp, and twitter all the day,  
They lilt their love from every tilting spray  
To make thy name remembered evermore.

A native in "The land of rustling wings,"  
Thy wholesome spirit comes to be a part  
Of all that woos us from the muggy mart,  
And draws us to the waiting wood, where clings  
A magic in the clustering leaves, where steals  
That Forest-Soul that charms, and soothes, and heals.



TO JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Small praise for lips of mine to call thee great :  
I have no breath to fill fame's noisy horn,  
No laurel wreath thy temples to adorn,  
Nor skill to read the Sibyl leaves of fate.  
But, passing critic, priest, and potentate,  
I'm at the front, when lovers fall in line.  
I touch thy lip with love's Amrita fine,  
And, kneeling here, I call the *consecrate*.

Love is the wand reveals the hidden wells ;  
Love is the crucible where gold is tried ;  
Love's ear hears what no priest is ever told.  
For laurel I bring love's sweet immortelles,  
And bind these brows my love has glorified.  
O Bard ! to do thee homage, love doth make me  
bold.

TO DANIEL SYLVESTER TUTTLE

Presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church.

Died April 17, 1923

There never yet was laid a corner-stone,  
But some great heart lay throbbing under it.  
No Churchman ever did himself acquit,  
And bring the waiting people to their own,  
But first his brain must ache, his spirit groan.  
His torch must at God's altar fires be lit,  
His thoughts with God's own thoughts be interknit,  
If he would lift the Holy Church up to God's throne.

Thy clergy come with "Laurel dipped in wine,  
And lay it thrice upon that favored lip,"  
That speaks the word of sempiternal truth.  
'Tis thine own heart's blood doth incarnadine  
The cornerstone of our blest fellowship,  
And pledge eternal life, immortal youth.

## ALEXANDER HAMILTON

(July 12, 1904)

Thou framer of the mighty sills of State,  
And builder of our commerce all abroad,  
A century has added only laud  
Unto thy teeming mind that, in debate,  
Did conquer difficulties—kill, create,—  
Did meet and throw, with toughest wrestling thews  
All foes of federal government; did fuse  
All forces; made them move as under fate.

Today we lay a wreath upon thy tomb,  
And rank thee first of those who wrought in gloom  
To bring our country to this day of power,  
And send it spinning on each glorious hour,  
In those prophetic forms that in the womb  
Of thy gigantic brain took shape and flower.

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN

How beautiful upon the hills, thy feet,  
O, bringer of glad tidings to the slave!  
Thy mighty soul transcends the blighting grave,  
And leads the ranks of those who found it sweet  
To burn their hearts out in life's furnace-heat  
To light their fellow men,—who dared to brave  
The blatant tongues that wag, the mobs that rave,  
When some path-finder leaves the ancient beat.

How beautiful thy feet upon the hills,  
Thy feet that leave the rocky slopes aglow!  
Beholding thee, the lowliest nature thrills,  
The loftiest feels, within, God's image grow:—  
Beneath thee freedom's everlasting sills,  
And over thee the heaven-encircling bow.

## SHELLEY

Thou soul-entrancing orb of mystic birth,  
With heart of light that leaves a burning wake,—  
Who knows thy whence?—the way thy soul doth  
take?

Parabola, whose course is guessed from earth,  
As men, astonished, glimpse thy glittering girth  
About the universe of thought and sense  
And feeling, flashing out to deeps intense  
And vastest sweep of love and joy and mirth.

Thou poet of the bright immensities!  
With room for comets trailing light, while stars,  
That Alcor darkens to, way-mark the skies  
With shining guides for him who leaps the bars,  
And dares, like thee, abysmal plunges broad  
Through chaos unto starlit peace with God.



MISCELLANEOUS





RIZPAH  
(2 Samuel xxi.)

There is a depth of misery that still  
Outrivals Sheol. I am in that depth.  
Souls damned are conscious of a retribution  
Earned, that makes Gehenna's pain seem just.  
I have not sinned. I loved God with a love  
That mounted unto heaven's highest vault.  
I loved the very vipers that I feared,  
Because they came from God's creating hand.  
And Saul, oh, mighty Saul! whose arm was like  
The girdle Gabriel gave to Eve,—how I  
Loved Saul! and God gave Saul; therefore my love  
Encompassed God. And yet, back on these lips  
That sung his praise awake, and e'en in sleep  
Did move in dreams of praise,—back on these lips  
His hand smote harshly with a blighting curse.  
That hand should hold a shield before my breast;  
Should fend the fiery darts that pierce my soul,  
And burn with mad'ning sting, until I hurl  
My bleating, broken life into the void,  
And pray that it may sink to darkest deep  
Of black Oblivion, and cease to be.  
Go mad? I could; but who would guard my dead?  
Oh! I could curse until my breath would smite  
The oaks in glorious Carmel, where I walked

With Saul one summer night, and heard the sea,  
And knew the tides that heaved in my own heart  
Were vaster yet. I looked up to the wide  
Profound with twinkling way-marks set  
Along the shining path that Enoch went,  
And knew that my own love should live and shine,  
When God had thrust those wondrous worlds all back  
Into the void. No, no! I have not cursed.  
The heart where love has dwelt shall never curse.  
The lips that love has sealed shall never curse.  
I stand here naked of all fending shields  
And take the rod. Death knows no wretch like me.  
The four winds strike whatever house holds love  
Of mine; a Babel smites whatever lip  
Would comfort me. I am a harvest-field  
With all my wealth of grain burned black by rain  
Of fire that fell from yonder sky. I am  
The Eden smitten by the curse of God,  
An Eden where sweet love alone has dwelt.  
I do not understand the ways of God,  
But weaklings are not tossed and tested thus.  
I fold my torture close as sign that I  
Am counted worthy in the eyes of God.

And, O, my Saul! my best beloved Saul!  
Wherever God have set thy dwelling-place,  
My love shall press forever on that door.  
As waters lean their weight against some dyke  
That holds its thwarting arm across the way,  
Day in, day out, while countless ages drag  
Through weary time; and yet no smallest wink

Of time do all those waters fail to keep  
Their vigil,—pressing, silent, constant, sure,  
Until some weary prop give way, and drops  
Become a trickling rill, that, while men sleep,  
Gnaws silently, till all the silent wrath,  
The thwarted passion of a hundred years,  
Comes sweeping through to be forever free;  
So I, whene'er the barriers shall break  
That hide thy face from me, my waiting love  
Shall leap into the breach. Then let the blows,  
The crushing blows that shall annihilate  
All yon bright worlds, oh! let them fall where'er  
They will; I'll keep fast hold of thee through all.

I drain my cup, and gaze athwart its rim  
At something I see hidden in God's face;  
And by some mystic sign my soul doth know  
That he is cleansing me so as by fire  
For some resplendent dawn of love and hope—  
For some sweet lifting of this murky veil,  
Behind which hides his face and Saul's. O, babes  
Of mine! 'tis this that nerves my weary arm;  
'Tis this that lifts me from the black abyss,  
And smites pain on the brow with fine contempt.  
I know that my Redeemer liveth; yea,  
Though worms destroy this body, yet shall I,  
In some vast life, behold Jehovah's face;  
Shall meet you there, sometime, my babes—and Saul.  
And I shall steep my famished soul in love.  
Just as the desert, parched through centuries,  
Can drink the rain as no oasis can,

Because each grain of sand cries out for rain;  
So shall my soul drink in more life than all  
Save One who yet shall die to purchase life  
For men. 'Tis this that shelters me who stands  
Here shelterless, through barley harvest till  
The autumn rain. 'Tis this that makes me brave  
To meet attacking eagles that would tear  
The sacred bodies of my babies here.  
See! where the cruel claws of that she wolf  
Tore at this breast where lay my baby's face;  
And where thy head has rested, too, my Saul.

Triumphant over all that pain can bring,  
From lowest depth to highest height, I mount,—  
To light, and life, and love, and God, and thee.  
As some exhaustless fountain feeds the sun,  
Until it melts the frosts and drives away  
The storms of winter, filling Abib's lap  
With store of ripening corn; so comes a wave,  
A tide of sun through all the frozen vales  
Of my storm-beaten life, and from me falls,  
Like last year leaves, when buds begin to start,  
My sorrow with its bitter sting of death.

Lo! in the East a glorious star! My eyes  
Fill with its light. A spirit sweet exhales  
From sea, and sky, and earth, enwrapping me.  
O, holy Eastern Star! it is thy light  
That soothes the torture in my aching heart.  
God's hand, in smiting me, smote still in love.  
His banner over me is love. I've kept

My steadfast watch about my dead, until  
There's naught to lure the raven and the wolf;  
The eagles trouble me no more. So, here,  
Where I have fought and conquered all that came,  
I'll lay me down and sleep. Did I not hear  
Young David sing before my Saul, one glorious  
Night,—“He giveth his beloved sleep”?

## THE TUMALUM

Over me the maiden's bower  
    Banks its cloud of curly balls  
On a thorn from whose leaf-twilight  
    Comes the catbird's plaintive calls.  
O, delicious mountain breezes,  
    Sweet with breath of fir and pine!  
How you bathe my lungs and thrill me  
    Like a draught of rare old wine!  
And I take deep inspirations  
    Till in sleep my senses numb  
By the purring of the waters  
    Of the drowsy Tumalum.

Work is good, and I'm companion  
    To the reaper and the plow;  
I've no quarrel with the Scripture  
    On the sweating of the brow;  
But on Sunday when the horses  
    Are all resting in the shade,  
Then I slip off to the river,  
    And I strip my feet and wade;  
Or I stretch beneath the alders  
    While I listen to the hum  
Of the restful, rumped, ripples  
    Of the drowsy Tumalum.



Far away in hazy distance  
Of October's purple pall,  
Where the clouds suggest the gateway  
Of some vast eternal hall,  
There I float, and trail my body  
Like an anchor here below;  
There I see what mortals see not,  
And know what immortals know;  
For I'm sleeping, and I'm dreaming,  
Lulled to slumber by the hum  
Of the lazy liquid laughter  
Of the drowsy Tumalum.

Yes, I'm sleeping, and I'm dreaming  
Of the maiden that I love:  
She with soul of mounting eagle  
And the sweetness of the dove.  
Come to me, my mountain maiden,  
Light of heaven in your eyes;  
Wake me with your precious kisses  
To the living far surprise.  
Sit by me and drink the beauty  
Of Life's happy, busy hum,  
As our spirits float together  
On the drowsy Tumalum.

## MY MOUNTAIN MAID

To E. M. C.

O, my sweetheart is a mountain maid  
With a laugh like the lilt of a rippling rill,  
And a cheek like the lily that blooms in the shade  
Of the alders back of the old saw-mill.

Her eyes mind me of the luminous dark  
On June midnights when the moon is fair,—  
Alert as a deer to the hunter's hark,  
And deep as the wells of the Alcantare.

Her bosom is like the sun-kissed snows;  
Her laughter is like the song of the thrush;  
And all about her path there goes  
A peace like the peace of the twilight hush.

When she meets me in the dewy dawn,  
Her footfall makes my heart beat glad,  
As light as the tread of the listening fawn,  
Or the whispering feet of an Oread.

The harebells lean to touch her gown;  
The hummingbird turns his burning throat;  
The morning sets his glorious crown  
On her raven locks that ripple and float



## MY MOUNTAIN MAID

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Like the rumpling hair of a water sprite,  
Or the wimpling waves that braid the sun  
In a thousand vanishing forms of light  
That dance on the pebbles, and glance and run

Over sands of beryl and tourmaline.  
The mountain loves her joyous song;  
The sky bends down with a smile serene,  
And Nature attends her all day long.

O, my sweetheart is a mountain maid,—  
And we sit here on the cañon's rim,  
While the purple petals of the daylight fade,  
And the rugged rocks grow soft and dim;

And love creeps up from the cañon deep,  
And love yearns down from the peaks above,  
And all the little wings folding for sleep  
Are whispering mystical words of love.

## THE SONG OF THE SICKLE

“Tickle, tickle, tickle,”  
Hums the mower’s dewy sickle  
    In the grass.  
Tickle-tops and timothy,  
    Meadow rue and clover,  
Feel a sudden tremor,  
    Bow, and topple over,  
As they feel the tickle  
Of the mower’s gliding sickle,  
Ever laughing through the meadows like a merry  
    county lass.

“Tickle, tickle, tickle,”  
Where the lights and shadows trickle  
    Through the green.  
Meadow-lark and bobolink  
    Pouring molten beauty  
For an aureole to crown  
    Homely toil and duty,  
While the glinting sickle,  
With its “tickle, tickle, tickle,”  
Misses sundry little blossoms where the bees will come  
    and glean.

“Tickle, tickle, tickle,”  
Heats of summer throb and prickle,  
    Full of life.

Steady tramp the sturdy bays,  
    Gearing smoothly gliding;  
Sleepy driver nods and dreams  
    From the drowsy riding,  
While the glancing sickle,  
With a tickle, tickle, tickle,  
Sings a song of love and gladness to the farmer's busy  
    wife.

“Tickle, tickle, tickle,”  
Oh! the dreams of youth are fickle  
    As a cloud;  
Changing as the changing stream,  
    Or the changing shadows,  
Come and gone, and here and there,  
    On the changing meadows,  
Till the tickle, tickle, tickle,  
Of death's ever busy sickle  
Lays us all away forever in a never-changing shroud.

## IN BOHEMIA

In Bohemia, peaceful Bohemia,  
O, there are no clocks and watches;  
Time is reckoned by the notches  
On a cloud,

In Bohemia.

In Bohemia, festive Bohemia,  
Lunch is spread on fragrant grasses,  
And a sunbeam laughs and passes  
O'er the plate,

In Bohemia.

In Bohemia, joyful Bohemia,  
Cups and spoons are purple clam-shells,  
Washed by dimpled, laughing damsels  
By a brook

In Bohemia.

In Bohemia, dreamy Bohemia,  
Here and yon a happy loafer;—  
Ne'er a gold-clawed human gopher  
Piling dirt

In Bohemia.

In Bohemia, care-free Bohemia,  
Everywhere are jolly, vagrant  
Sybarites, who breathe the fragrant  
Breath of life,

In Bohemia.

## ARCADEE

I was born in Arcadee;  
And every leaf on every tree  
Has a secret word to say  
To my ear, where'er I stray.  
I was born in Arcadee,  
And I've stayed there, happy me.

The little realm of Arcadee  
Is just like this world you see;  
Only,—there the native born  
Are immune to care and scorn.  
Every discord is a glee  
To those born in Arcadee.

They have storms in Arcadee—  
Summer, winter, by decree;  
But the natives only know  
Just the *treasures* of the snow.  
Heart of light is plain to me  
In every storm of Arcadee.

He that's born in Arcadee  
Holds the golden sesame;  
In his footprint there is seen

Crystal fount of Hippocrene.  
All the world shall bend the knee  
To those born in Arcadee.

Better than to own the sea—  
Being born in Arcadee.  
To their Christ-anointed eyes  
Every vale is Paradise.  
I was born in Arcadee,  
And I've stayed there, happy me

## SNOWING

Feathering the willows,  
Drifting in the hedges,  
Piling downy pillows  
On the mountain ledges,

Bordering the streamlet  
Where the sedges shiver,  
Capturing a dreamlet  
For the drowsy river ;

Weaving shrouds of ermine  
For the perished roses  
Soft as couch of merman  
When the deep reposes ;

Speaking in a whisper  
Mystical and olden,  
Silver-throated lisper  
With a language golden ;

Smoothing out the wrinkles  
In the cemetery,  
Laughing where the tinkles  
Of the bells are merry ;



Dancing like a fairy,—  
    Vanishing, returning,  
Till the spirits airy  
    Set the woods a-yearning.

## A DAY IN JUNE

All day long the bobolink  
Has tinkled his golden chain,  
With a tinkle-tump-tink of each echoing link,  
Like the musical trinkle of rain,

Or like the rimple of fairy feet  
Dancing on moon-kissed lawn,  
Shaking the silvery dewdrop sweet  
From the lips of a rose at dawn.

All day long the elfish winds  
Have rumped the meadow's hair ;  
The spirit of Puck a sly net spins  
In rollicking laughter there.

And ever the witching lips of June  
Have whispered a word in my ear ;  
And taught me to read the mystical rune  
That's writ in the water here.

And who has been the plenipo  
To tip me the wily wink :  
What South wind says, how violets grow?  
That poet, the Bobolink.

## SPRING

The bees are droning dreamily in pear and apple bloom;

The gossamers are drifting on in fluffy flakes of spume.

O, lazy, hazy, afternoon, replete with life and love!

O, dreamy, creamy clouds that float like mystic isles above!

O, gentle opal April skies, just wide enough for soul,  
By hunting through this finite space, to guess the mighty whole!

I lean against the friendly bark of this benignant oak,  
That thrice has heard the century clock peal its solemn stroke;

I feel its prophecies of life transfused into my blood,  
And like the forces in its trunk that crowd in limb and bud,

I sense the pent-up potencies demanding to be freed  
In color and aroma, and the verities of deed.

I answer to the climbing sap; I heed the aching earth  
That travails since creation in the agonies of birth;  
I put my hand unto the plow, and keep my eyes ahead;  
I leave the dead to lag behind and put away their dead.  
I hear the bluebird's tirly-wirly, hear the flicker's trill;  
I hear the cricket in the grass, the heifer on the hill.

The bass has picked a spawning place ; the snake is in  
the sun ;

And everywhere the nimble feet of life begin to run ;  
And everywhere I turn my eye—to sky, or sea, or sod,  
I read a poem ending with—

The signature of God.

## THE MAIDEN SPRING

The sweet, warm lips of early spring  
Come full upon my own ;  
They softly press and fondly cling  
Like lips that I have known.

Her garments touch me here and there,  
By wanton breezes stirred ;  
My forehead feels her rippling hair,  
Like plume of passing bird.

Her budding breasts thrill all the dawn,  
Through vapors thinly laced ;  
And by the swelling curves of lawn,  
Her amorous limbs are traced.

The sun portrays her beaming face  
On every waking hill ;  
Her long hair curls a merry race  
With mosses in the rill.

Her sash flies gleaming through the wood,  
Like flash of oriole ;  
And sweet as laugh of maidenhood—  
Her merry barcarole.

All birds and blossoms by the way  
Are knights of her demesne:—  
The season's jubilant array  
To greet the sylvan queen.

## THE THORN IS IN BLOOM

The thorn is in bloom and the thrush is here,  
And over me coos a dove;  
By this I know it is time of year  
For hearts to fall in love.

O, yes, I know the thrush will go,  
The dove will cease to coo;  
But love in loveliness will grow  
Forever for me and you.

And you, my Love, will catch the note  
Of dove and jubilant thrush,  
And pour to me from happy throat  
Far yon in eternity's hush.

And I will bless this glorious morn  
That brought your love to me,  
With song of thrush and bloom of thorn  
And pledge of eternity.

## AFTER AUTOLYCUS

Spring has come with a hop, skip, and jump,  
With, heigh! the young hearts, how they beat!  
The catbird lilts in the lilac clump,  
And, O, the woodland breath is sweet!

The primrose nods to the river's brink,  
With, heigh! the brown thrush, how he pours!  
The tiny fairy glasses clink  
To the God that rules in the Out-of-doors.

The brooklet gurgles its delight,  
With, heigh! with heigh! the sea and the sky!  
The meadow calls, the woods invite;  
For Spring, sweet maid, is passing by.



## MY PHILOSOPHY

A pessimist? No, Sir, not I.

An optimist? not I, no, no!

I do not follow either cry:—

“The foe is weak!” “Too strong the foe!”

The pessimist reports, “A host!”

Off go ten thousand home-robbed men,  
Chased by imaginary ghost,  
Then limping steal to camp again.

The optometrist reports, “They flee

From shadows their own fancies cast!”

And lo! the foe he would not see

Has captured him and his at last.

The battle-winner, he reports

The foe’s conditions as they are.

He numbers troops, examines forts,

And learns the background of his war.

He learns his men; develops them;—

Their hearts, their bodies, souls, and brains,  
Till contact with his garment’s hem  
Puts life and mettle in their veins.

Acceptor am I; I would learn  
What sort of stuff I work withal;  
Would know all matters that concern  
Escaping failure's fatal pall.

So I accept my lump of clay;  
I learn its potency, its lack;  
And then I mould as best I may,  
And without murmur hand it back.

THE HEART KNOWETH ITS OWN  
BITTERNESS

Prov. 14 : 10

Yea, gall is sweet to what the heart  
In bitterest moment knows ;  
The rankling barb of poisoned dart  
Is rapture to its throes.

The most our nearest friend can do  
Is but to dimly guess :  
Heart's labyrinth is without clew ;  
It knoweth its own bitterness.

## IMMORTALITY

Ecc. 10 : 1

A fly in the ointment!  
Fortunate fly:  
By God's own appointment  
Never to die.

A fly in the ointment!  
Pity him not:  
Immortal annointment  
In that little pot.

## O GOD, BE BOUNTIFUL TO ME.

O God, be bountiful to me!

“Be pitiful,” I oft have prayed,—  
In time of need have cried for aid;  
But now I ask large things of thee:  
O God, be bountiful to me!

O God, be bountiful to me!

Why should I shame thy countless store  
By asking crumbs from off the floor?  
As son, I ask a legacy.  
O God, be bountiful to me!

O God, be bountiful to me!

As ravens cry for carrion flesh,  
Thy children cry for toys and trash;  
I prove my vast belief in thee:  
O God, be bountiful to me!

O God, be bountiful to me!

Not as a slave, I kneel and pray;  
Not as a beggar by the way:  
A kingdom here I ask of thee:  
O God, be bountiful to me.

## “THE MINUTE MAN”

I'm ready for life;  
I welcome the bugle that calls to the strife;  
I hear the guns boom, and I push for the van;  
God's wanting a man,  
And I'm ready for life.

I'm ready for death;  
I'll be near the flag when I take my last breath;  
This body must fall: it shall fall in the van!  
I kneel to God's plan,  
And I'm ready for death.

## TRANSFIGURATION

The shadows deepen  
On the hill ;  
I hear one lonely  
Whippoorwill.

The purring leaves,  
The breathing herds,  
The hushing croon  
Of brooding birds,

The drowsy hum  
Of insect flight,  
The downy footfall  
Of the night,

Are breathing secrets  
In my ear :  
They tell me that  
Morpheus is near ;

They tell me thou  
Art coming soon  
With all thy train,  
O, summer moon.

## TRANSFIGURATION

A dreamy peace  
Swims in my brain,  
Like breath of woodland  
After rain.

My soul's at rest,  
Hushed on the sea  
Of undisturbed  
Tranquillity;

The knotty problems  
Of the day,  
Melt into mist,  
And fade away.

Time's roaring wheels  
No longer jar;  
I hear the dream-bells  
From afar.

My eye-lids droop;  
All burdens lift;  
My hands relax;  
My soul's adrift.

Dream crowds on dream,  
While Love and Hope  
Shift the bright  
Kaleidoscope.

I lose my way,  
And grope and guess,



In slumber's mazy  
Wilderness ;

Or float on Lethe's  
Bosom deep,  
A wanderer in  
The land of sleep.

## LIFE

I have lived the full life of the free;  
I have not worn the yoke of the world;  
I have been a white-cap on the sea;  
In the tornado's heart I have whirled.

I've accepted myself and my load;  
I have moved neither lag nor in haste;  
I have gathered what grew by the road,  
And life has been sweet to my taste.

I have not allowed God to compel;  
For my heart has kept pace with his might.  
God sends every coward to hell;  
So I have not cringed in his sight.

To hell goes the soul without life;  
So I drink at Life's springs, breathe Life's air;  
I fight on her side in all strife;  
Her badge and her password I bear.

I have cast my soul's burdens on none;  
I have called upon no man for aid;  
From the stuff that God gave me, I've spun  
The creed I have lived unafraid.

I have captured that vessel of gold,  
That clings at the rainbow's end;  
Its treasures I have and I hold;  
And they grow, as I lavishly spend.

And when the Great Judge shall command  
My life and its deeds to be sieved,  
I'll advance with my lifted right hand,  
And answer him—"Lord, I have lived."

## ALGOMAR

In the following mystic song, I myself coined both the words, Algomar and Balmoree. Later I saw Algomar in a poem by "Ironquill," given as the name of a star. I wrote asking him where he ran across the word, and he replied that it was his own coining.

O, hast thou e'er dreamed of Algomar,  
Sweet Algomar by the Balmoree?  
Its forests and fountains and palaces are  
All built in the cloud, and are all for thee.

The gardens all bloom with thy hopes and thy dreams;  
The fountains sing ever the song of thy heart;  
The palaces fair—each happy hall gleams  
With likeness of thee—the fruit of thine art.

The angels may wander with wondering eyes,  
And long to discover this mystical realm,  
That has a legation in Paradise,  
An ambassador under each oak and elm;

But never an angel knows Algomar,  
And never they sit by the Balmoree;  
The king of that realm is an avatar,  
And the kingdom is locked with a mystical key.

O, an unseen hand plays a zither sweet,  
With the haunting thrills of a long-lost rune;  
Those words no mortal may repeat,  
And they weave the soul in a soft cocoon.

By the Balmoree one waits thee there,—  
And, yearning, offers a golden bowl,  
To touch thy lips with Amrita rare—  
Supernal love for the thirsty soul.

O, haste thee to find sweet Algomar—  
To meet one there by the Balmoree;  
The forests and fountains and palaces are  
Empty of all when empty of thee.

## I GO, I GO

What's peace? To emanate unvext.  
What's rest? Unhindered to evolve.  
What's now irks not, but aye what's next;  
The problem sought is one to solve.  
I dare not cast my eye to rear;  
Before me fleets the luring bow;  
To cease to move—my only fear;  
To stand is death.

I go, I go.

I welcome struggles cowards shun.  
What matter fame and clink of gold?  
I'm girt for one unending run;  
No siren song my course may hold.  
"Speed on! Speed on!" I hear a cry.  
I heed; and whether soft stars glow,  
Or ragged lightnings rend the sky,  
With face to front,

I go, I go.

Empires are born, and kings are crowned  
On battlefields strown thick with dead.  
My captain's voice is welcome sound;  
The Rainbow Bridge I may not tread;  
Its radiant floor not for my feet;

With Thor I dare the gulfs below ;  
Like him to tread fair Asgard's street  
With conquering heart,  
I go, I go.

I go to still expanding fields,  
To boundless skies and visions broad ;  
I go to break all bars and seals,  
To span the Vast, to fathom God.  
I go to ever younger youth ;—  
To pierce, and solve, and see, and know.  
With gates of soul set wide to Truth,  
And fear dethroned,  
I go, I go.

I go from human to divine,  
From clouded eye to vision clear ;  
I go to make all beauty mine,—  
From circle cramped to angel sphere.  
Farewell the worm ; farewell the clod !  
However far, however slow,  
Along yon starry way to God  
On lengthening wing,  
I go, I go.

## APOLLO

Dare I? No, I dare not ;  
And yet, I *will* dare !  
I'll pour, and I'll spare not  
The wine of my heart in thy temple, Apollo.  
Here in these grasses moves thy tuneful breath,  
In thrills so low my spirit listeneth.  
And now the phorminx down the hollow  
Echoes wildly, and I follow,  
Heart and soul  
At thy control,  
Mad to be with thee, my sweet voiced Apollo.

Am I too bold ?  
My dread whispers—"Yes."  
But I'll *be* bold,  
And I'll not stop to guess  
What key will admit to thy temple, Apollo.  
I grasp at the bolts with hands that hold fast ;  
And whatever my fate, I'll be found here at last ;  
For impelling this clod  
Is the will of a god,  
That will not be locked out, or left dead on the sod.



## EASTER

Oh! black was the night when my Lord was betrayed,  
And darker the day when He lay in the tomb—  
The gangs of Gehenna 'gainst Heaven arrayed,  
The world plunged in chaos of horror and gloom.

We trusted 'twas He whose right arm should redeem  
Poor Israel, crouching in sackcloth and tears.  
We looked that the sword and the banner should gleam  
Victorious over Rome's insolent spears.

We thought to have seen, as Gehazi of old,  
The hosts of Jehovah with chariots of flame—  
A burning tornado relentlessly rolled  
Against every foe of fair Israel's name.

When my Lord on the Cross gave that anguishing cry,  
A dart struck at life, as when sweet Eden fell;  
A shudder ran cold through the earth and the sky;  
There was sorrow in Heaven and triumph in hell.

Then Omnipotent Power spoke down from the Throne;  
An answering light shot aloft from the grave,  
As forth from the clutches of cerement and stone,  
Came Jesus, triumphant and mighty to save.

Oh, bright was the dawn when my Saviour arose!  
Oh, Easter, glad Easter, and bright was thy day!

“Hosanna! Hosanna! He conquers all foes!”  
There is triumph in heaven, in sheol dismay.

He is risen! O, grave, where now is thy boast!  
He is risen! O, death, and where now is thy sting!  
Rejoicing we join with the heavenly host,  
And shout with the angels till star-spaces ring.

All glory to God in the highest. Amen.  
As in the beginning, so aye let it be.  
Hosanna till heaven's vault echoes again;  
For Jesus is risen, and Man shall be free.

## MEMORIAL HYMN

Hymn sung at the memorial exercises of Trinity Episcopal Church, Emmetsburg, Iowa.

Asleep in Jesus, soldiers, rest  
Where bugle calls no more molest.  
In garlands of your country wound,  
May your last slumber be profound.

Asleep in Jesus, nevermore  
To be disturbed by battle roar;  
Remembered by these stars of gold,  
Whose brightness never shall grow old.

Mid glad acclaim of flags and bells,  
We wind each brow with immortelles,  
And pray God's angels vigil keep,  
Where fair Columbia's heroes sleep.

## O, HOLY SPIRIT

Tune, Zephyr, 87

WHITSUNDAY

O, Holy Spirit, vital calm,  
That makes the Sabbath day so sweet;  
It heals me with a heavenly balm,  
And draws me to the mercy-seat.

O, Holy Spirit, Comforter,  
That speaks, and lo! my sorrows cease;  
With love my deepest senses stir,  
And all my life flows on in peace.

O, Holy Spirit, breath of God,  
With incense filling all my soul;  
That frees me from the clinging clod,  
And makes my broken spirit whole.

O, Holy Spirit, power divine,  
That moves upon my life today;  
Thy guiding light doth constant shine,  
And bless me with its heavenly ray.

## GOD-KIND

We think thy thoughts, O, mighty God!  
Thy thoughts that thrill through space afar—  
That hold in place each twinkling star,  
And permeate the teeming sod.

We think thy thoughts, and live thy life;  
Our souls are fathered by thine own,  
And high as is thy holy throne,  
So high we mount from sin and strife.

We live thy life, and love thy love;  
The tendrils of our souls entwine  
Our fellow men, as love divine  
Entwines and draws us all above.

We think, and live, and love, and grow,  
Like thee, in ever brightening ways.  
We are God-kind, and all our days  
Are in thy hands who made us so.

PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL TOWARD  
MEN

O, bells, O, throbbing bells, O, joyous bells!  
Proclaim the peace of God through all the earth!  
From out your million throats the anthem swells,  
And rolls from pole to pole to tell the birth

Of Christ, the Son of God, the Morning Star;—  
Redeemer of the world, and victor, he,  
O'er death and hell and all the sins that war  
Against the soul of man. Forever free!

O, send the rapturous peals of joy and peace  
To join the stars, to find their way  
To heart of earth, and thrill its plains and seas;  
And, best of all, to hold eternal sway

Within the human heart. O, peace, sweet boon  
Of heaven breathed down on man by angel lips,  
To stay with breath of life the fierce simoon  
Of sin; to stop forevermore the Sun's eclipse,—

The Sun of Righteousness that hath at last  
Arisen with healing in his wings. Proclaim  
The joyous news, O, bells: God's armies massed  
For peace against the works of sin and shame.

I hear it pulsing in the radiant sky:

“Good will toward men!” I hear the bells of all  
The world uniting in the glad reply:

“Mankind redeemed forever from the Fall.”

O, join the anthem, all ye sons of God,

Joint heirs with Christ to all God holds in store;  
Crowned new this glorious Christmas morn; new shod  
With peace; the Christ made ours forevermore.

## THE MERMAID'S SONG

'Tis not the moon,  
I know, I know,  
That makes the ocean ebb and flow;  
'Tis not the moon,  
No, no!  
'Tis love, 'tis love,  
I know, I know,  
That thrills the heart of the ocean so;  
'Tis yearning love,  
I know;—  
Triumphant love, and the undertow  
Is a woman's heart,  
I know, I know,  
A happy heart,  
I know.

'Tis not the sun,  
I know, I know,  
That makes the rainbow come and go;  
'Tis not the sun,  
No, no!  
'Tis love, 'tis love,  
I know, I know,  
That tints the spray with the iris glow;  
'Tis love's sweet kiss,



I know.  
Love's radiant kiss, and the luring bow  
Is love's bright crown  
I know, I know,  
Love's aureole,  
I know.

'Tis not the winds,  
Ah, wo! ah, wo!  
That thrash and trample the ocean so;  
'Tis not the wind,  
No, no!  
'Tis angry love,  
I know, I know,  
That beats the wave into spindrift snow;  
'Tis angry love,  
Ah, wo!  
The wrath of love, and the shuddering throe  
Is a woman's heart,  
I know, I know,  
A maddened heart,  
I know.

'Tis not the boreal breath,  
Ah, me!  
That freezes the heart of the polar sea;  
Not wintry wind,  
Ah, me!  
'Tis injured love,  
(Ah, whisper low!)  
That chills the Polar Ocean so;

'Tis wounded love,  
I know.

'Tis wounded love, and the icy floe  
Is a woman's heart,  
I know, I know,—  
A broken heart,  
I know.

## LOVE AND I

We kept our happy watch together,  
    Love and I,  
In all the golden, dreamy weather  
    When June held in fee the sky.  
We watched the rainbow in the Blue;  
Armfuls of roses for us two;  
We knew our dreams would all come true,  
    Love and I.

We kept our steadfast watch together,  
    Love and I,  
Through sad October's mournful weather,  
    When the winds went moaning by.  
Our eyelids strained against the sleet,  
But not an inch would we retreat;  
We held at bay death and defeat,  
    Love and I.

We keep our cheerless watch together,  
    Love and I,  
Through all the dark and stormy weather,  
    Under winter's shuddering sky.  
A mound between us, piled with snow,  
Ice in our hearts, yet we'll not go;  
We'll keep our watch through darkest throe,  
    Love and I.

We'll keep our happy watch together,  
    Love and I,  
Through all the bright supernal weather,  
    Under heaven's eternal sky.  
We'll watch the dross turn into gold;  
We'll watch eternity unfold,  
And, Oh! each other's hands we'll hold,  
    Love and I.

## MOLLY BAWN

O, green the sedges grow beside  
The pond in Pioneer;  
And greener grow the graves of those  
Who once were dwelling here.

The mill was busy all the day,  
With happy hum and whirl;  
About the idle millstone now  
The ivies cling and curl.

O, many a stilly afternoon,  
And many a summer dawn,  
The lilies moved to the old canoe  
Of me and Molly Bawn;

And many a night, when moon was full,  
And echoing hills and glades  
Resounded to the joyous shouts  
Of merry men and maids,

With hearts aglow like burning stars  
That filled the winter sky,  
We sped along through realms of love,  
Sweet Molly Bawn and I;

And Molly gave her promise there,  
Whose sweetness shall abide

When every star has faded out,  
And all but love has died.

She slumbers now, sweet Molly Bawn,  
Beneath the linden shade,  
Where first the violets bloom in spring,  
And last the summers fade.

All season long the wood-thrush sings,  
Deep in the grove withdrawn,  
The songs he sang so long ago  
To me and Molly Bawn;

And lovers fly along the ice,  
Or push the old canoe  
Among the water-lilies now,  
As we were wont to do.

And through their joy a gentle voice  
Is calling ever on  
To where my soul shall meet the soul  
Of angel Molly Bawn.

## NIGHT

Softly, dear night, are thy tresses  
Hiding the world's labor scars;  
And though one sees not, yet one guesses  
That over one's head shine the stars.

O, fit is thy dim realm for dreaming,—  
For dreaming, and weeping, and sleep;  
For then, though the eyes may be streaming,  
The world cannot know that they weep.

I weep not; I fold thee around me,  
Sweet night, and I clasp thy cheek close.  
Softly thy tresses have wound me;  
I weep not; I dream and repose.

## BIMINI

The sleigh-bells,  
The May-bells,  
The sweet buds  
Are mine;  
The starlight,  
The far light  
In fond eyes,  
The wine!  
Hillo-ho! hio-ho!  
The fond eyes!  
The wine!

Osiris  
And Iris,  
The mermaid,  
The Queen  
Of Fairy,  
So airy,  
The sweet Hippocrene!  
Hillo-ho! hio-ho!  
The sweet Hippocrene!

The morning  
Adorning  
The East



Calls me fair.  
O jolly!  
The holly—  
The holly I wear.

Hillo-ho! hio-ho!  
Youth is so sweet!  
It thrills me  
And fills me  
From crown to my feet;  
Hillo-ho! hio-ho!  
My gay dancing feet!  
Hillo! hillo! hio! ho, ho! ho, ho!

Puck, singing to Ponce de Leon, as he sleeps on a bank  
of flowers.

## SERENADE

Soft stars shining,  
Clouds reclining  
On the lining  
    Of the Blue.  
Roses feeling  
O'er them stealing,  
Like hands of healing,  
    Mists of dew.

O, sweet maiden,  
Slumber-laden  
Airs of Aidenn  
    Bring thee dreams!  
Come each fairy,  
Light and airy,  
Sweetly tarry  
    In her dreams.

Now she's sleeping;  
O'er her creeping,  
In Love's keeping,  
    Dream-wings light.  
Guard her, Venus,  
While between us,  
Dark between us,  
    Falls the night.

## FAIRY LULLABY

Lullaby, O, lullaby!  
Baby Darling, close your eye,  
While the beautiful Queen Mab  
Swings you by a spider-web  
From a lily white and tall,  
Near some Dream-land waterfall,  
Rocking with her tiny hand  
To a tune of By-lo-land.  
Lullaby, O, lullaby!

Lullaby, O, Lullaby!  
Stars are peeping in the sky;  
Birdie snuggles in his nest;  
Baby, close to Mother's breast,  
Drifts away to land of sleep,  
Through the gates the angles keep,  
Gently rocked by Mother's hand  
On a cloud in By-lo-land.  
Lullaby O, Lullaby!

Lullaby, O, Lullaby!  
Baby Darling, close your eye.  
Mother's love is sweet and warm;  
Mother's breast keeps off the storm.  
Drowsy, drowsy, to and fro,—

## FAIRY LULLABY

Long eyelashes drooping low:  
Baby's little pink feet stand  
Deep in blooms of By-lo-land.  
Lullaby, O, Lullaby.

## WHAT IS IT THAT TUGS AT MY HEART?

Perfection of earth in her October dress;  
Perfection of sky in a gown of soft haze;  
Far vistas that lure me to wonder and guess  
What landscapes eternal lie hid from my gaze.  
The glory! the glory! and yet, Oh, the smart!  
What is it that tugs at my heart?

A valley lies skirted with woods on each side,  
Dear Valley of White Oak, the home of my youth;  
Clear Creek and the cool "Upper Spring" with its tide  
Of waters as sweet as the fountain of truth.  
The glory! the glory! and yet, Oh, the smart!  
What is it that tugs at my heart?

My memory, river with margins of gold,  
Flows through that dear Valley, and I a light boat,  
Float there among lilies, where echoes are rolled,  
As sweet as the song from the mockingbird's throat.  
The glory! the glory! and yet, Oh, the smart!  
What is it that tugs at my heart?

Old Homestead, with windows swung wide to the night;  
The moonlight streams in over forms that I love;  
An unbroken home; sleeping sound, sleeping light,

And over them spread the white wings of a dove.  
 The glory! the glory! and yet, Oh, the smart!  
 What is it that tugs at my heart?

I wander by Clear Creek with old willow rod,  
 A chub and a shiner or two on my string,  
 A greensward as soft as a mortal e'er trod,  
 And a foot that is light as a young eagle's wing.  
 The glory! the glory! and yet, Oh, the smart!  
 What is it that tugs at my heart?

I walk over fields where 'twas I led the charge;  
 I feel the old itch of my hand for the sword,—  
 My jeweled Excalibur, keen for the targe,  
 When battles were on in behalf of my Lord.  
 The glory! the glory! and yet, Oh, the smart!  
 What is it that tugs at my heart?

I stroll through the moonlight again with my bride,  
 While the earth like an opal burns under my feet.  
 I feel the warm surges of life at high tide,  
 And the touch of her hand is supernally sweet.  
 The glory! the glory! and yet, Oh, the smart!  
 What is it that tugs at my heart?

I push a gate gently :—Alone with the dead;  
 The underground city so packed and so drear!  
 I stroke the grass softly; I bow my gray head;  
 And I know that I, too, shall soon journey down here.  
 The glory! the glory! and yet, Oh, the smart!  
 What is it that tugs at my heart?

CHRISTMAS, 1915

O, gentle Babe of Bethlehem,  
With humble hearts we kneel,  
And meekly touch thy garment's hem  
Full sure that it will heal.

O, gentle Babe in lowly stall,  
Triumphant now above,  
O breathe good will and peace to all  
The many friends I love.

## CHRISTMAS, 1916

Suffer all the little tots  
To scamper up to me;  
Forbid them not to leap and shout  
About the Christmas tree.

The joy of Jehovah twinkles  
Through the branches green;  
His smile is woven in and out  
Among the tinsel sheen.

How long the world has wandered blind,  
What useless outrage done  
By teaching kids that God can't joke,  
Or have a bit of fun.

He leaps and gambols in the meadows  
All the summer long,  
With butterflies and bumblebees,  
Where clover blossoms throng;

He tumbles in the water with  
The green and freckled frogs,  
With dragonflies and pickereɪ,  
With pouts and pollywogs.



But when it comes to Christmas day—  
That holy, happy time,  
'Tis then he comes and romps with us  
In prankish pantomime,

And shows us how to turn 'er loose,  
And rumpus with the kids  
In all their lilting laughter  
Till their sleep-encumbered lids

Are folded for the coming night  
In dreams of Santa Claus,  
Where they whirl in happy dances,  
While the angels clap applause.

And all the while he doesn't know,  
Each merry little elf,  
That jolly, jingling Santa Claus  
Is just the Lord himself.

## CHRISTMAS, 1917

Full many a Happy New Year, I mind,  
Full many a Merry Christmas,  
When apples, and cookies, and candy, and nuts  
Went galloping down my isthmus.

I carried the key in those halcyon days  
Of life and its sanctum sanctorum;  
Prince Arthur's shield, stout Siegfried's blade,  
And the seven-league boots, I wore 'em.

The pot of gold at the rainbow's end,  
I still have it here in my treasure;  
For, like an old bee-tree, I've kept the sweets  
That boyhood packed here without measure.

I think of my friend, whose life is to me  
Like the gold-sanded river, Pactolus,  
Of the woman I love, who loves me in turn,  
And breathes me the breath of Aeolus.

And so I am happy this Christmas eve;  
My stocking right yonder is hanging;  
I gaze in the embers and see the Star,  
While winter outside is slambanging.

So here's to the lad of those halcyon days!  
And here's to the years between us!  
I live in them all, from first to the last,  
And my evening star yonder is Venus.

## CHRISTMAS, 1918

Three hundred and sixty-five days ago  
The hammers of Thor were slugging  
Away at the sills of Democracy,  
And the fangs of all hell were tugging

Hard at the roots of the Tree of Life,  
That quaked from their devilish gnawing;  
The angels were sad; all demons were glad,  
And the steeds of the Kaiser were pawing.

Poor Belgium panted, a wolf-torn lamb,  
And France lay gasping and bleeding:  
The Hun in his frenzy raped and burned;  
But God in the shadow was heeding.

I sat there and gazed in the midnight murk,  
My faith still hugging its anchor;  
Foreseeing the day when the Bonny Blue Flag  
Would triumph o'er Germany's rancor.

Tonight through the universe runs a thrill,—  
The thrill of Millennium dawning;  
No more of the Hun, with his havoc, thank God!  
No more of his Kultur's spawning!

The Boys are leaving the trench with its mud,  
Its cooties and "shell-proofs" gory.  
We welcome them back to the home of the free;  
We welcome them back to Old Glory.

I sit here wrapped in a sweet content;  
A dove at my window is cooing—  
The dove of peace with the olive branch,  
That the heart of the world is subduing.

O greatest day in the annals of God!  
The lamb has lain down with the lion;  
And the feet of him who publisheth peace  
Are kindling the slopes of Mount Zion.

So hands all round! America mine,  
With Italy, France, and England!  
The clock is beginning to strike midnight,  
And Santa Claus' bells are jinglin'.

## CHRISTMAS, 1919

Dear Uncle Al:—You said you wonder  
Whether any boy or girl  
Ever thinks to send old Santa  
Any toy, or card, or curl,

Or ever thinks to say, "I thank you,"  
For the million gifts he brings,  
On his cold drives every Christmas  
With his pack of toys and things.

So, you send him this short letter,  
To tell him we are all so glad  
For his love and all his presents,  
That each little lass and lad

Gets so happy and excited,  
That our memories are drowned.  
Tell him, when we choose a ruler,  
He's the fellow will be crowned.

Tell him that we don't forget him  
Never, never, never,—'cause  
All his Christmas gifts remind us.  
And say: "I love you, Santa Claus."

## CHRISTMAS, 1920

Hurrah for the holly bough!  
Old winter is jolly now!  
    We've waited all year;  
    But Christmas is here,  
And joy on every brow.

Adown the long slope they're sped,  
The flying toboggan and sled;  
    While skaters twine  
    And the runners shine  
Like stars that sparkle o'erhead.

The jolly and jargoning bells!  
Their tinkling in sweetness excels;  
    The treasures of snow,  
    And the laughter, O,  
With its musical magical spells.

Hurrah for the holly bough!  
The children are jolly now;  
    For winter is here  
    With Christmas cheer,  
And joy on every brow.

CHRISTMAS, 1922

May the season bring to you  
Your heart's most fond desire:  
Old books to read, old friends to talk,  
And old wood for your fire.

And when old books have lured you on  
Until you've reached "THE END."  
When talk dies down and embers low,  
Then— "Peace be!"  
from Your Friend.



## HEARTSEASE AND RUE

Because on days so long and sweet,  
Because on nights so starry bright,  
When life and love flowed round my feet  
With gifts exceeding thought and sight;  
Because from heartsease then I kissed the dew,  
I will not mar the memory now by plucking rue.

## THE WHITE STAG

(From Uhland)

Three hunters went thrashing about with their brag;  
They were going, so said they, to hunt the white stag.

But soon they lay down in the shade of a tree,  
And each had a dream, as you'll presently see:

(The first)

I dreamed I was bustling about in the brush,  
When—away went the stag through the woods with a  
rush!

(The second)

And as he flew by with the clash and the clang  
Of hounds, I let drive with my rifle—ker-bang!

(The third)

When there on the turf the stag bleeding I saw,  
I lustily tooted my horn—tra-ra!

They scarcely had finished relating their dream  
When the stag with his antlers went by like a gleam!

And ere the three Nimrods aroused from the thrill,  
A white stag went vanishing over the hill,  
With a “rush,” and a “bang,” “Tra-ra!”

## LOSS AND GAIN

I once was rich, then all the poor  
Strewed blessings thick about my door;  
The rich walked with me, arm in arm,  
And in my presence found a charm.  
My wealth was swept into the sea;  
Then rich *and* poor deserted me.  
But I had learned to love and give:  
That grace I hold; by that I live.

Fame lifted up my name on high;  
I rode on clouds; I touched the sky.  
There came a blast that chilled my fame,  
And those who praised were wont to blame.  
But all the discipline, the skill,  
I'd won the while, I have that still.

While I was massing wealth I knew  
The wings on which wealth ever flew;  
Was mindful that the only gain  
Is what we learn through peace, through pain;  
Was mindful that the only grace  
That blooms eternal in the face  
Is that sweet grace hid from the world  
Within the bosom chastely furled;  
A grace that wealth cannot supply,  
That lack of wealth cannot deny.

While fame was spreading sweetest sound,  
My ear was ever close to ground  
To catch the tramp of history's feet  
That pass on to the judgment seat.  
They hasten not when fame incites;  
They dally not when wealth invites;  
But carry on into the gloom  
That chills the dark and voiceless tomb  
Those faithful motion-picture reels  
Whose record all our life reveals.

## THE BALLAD OF THE YOUNG WOODMAN

“Listen, dear Mother, what call do I hear?”

(Oh, the wind in the pine!)

“It is nothing, Fair Alice, but the falls and the wier.”

(And the lamp it is low.)

“What was it, dear Mother, that flashed through the night?”

(Oh, the wind in the pine!)

“It was nothing, Fair Alice, but the beacon so bright.”

(And the lamp it is low.)

“What awful thing, Mother, lies stark at the door?”

(Oh, the wind in the pine!)

“’Tis the mantle, Fair Alice, the young Woodman wore.”

(And the lamp it is low.)

“What is it, dear Mother, they bear on the pall?”

(Oh, the wind in the pine!)

“’Tis the Woodman, Fair Alice, the young Woodman tall.”

(And the lamp it is low.)

She has knelt by the pall, and she’s kissed where they shot.

(Oh, the wind in the pine!)  
They chide and they call, but her lips answer not.  
(And the lamp it is low.)

## TO JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

O Poet, to whom the sweet spirit of childhood  
Has whispered its secrets of pleasure and pain;  
Who knows every pathway of pasture and wildwood;  
Whose poems are fresh with the dew and the rain;

I cannot refrain till the grass is green over thee  
To tell thee I love thee, and follow thee close  
Through orchard and meadow, while summer skies  
hover thee,—  
By brook, and through tangles where “pizen vine”  
grows.

I lie down and snooze under trees of thy making;  
I ride with Doc Sifers along country lanes;  
At springs of thy spirit my thirst I am slaking;  
I laugh with thy laughter and ache with thy pains.

Let's wander by “Deer Crick” “knee-deep” in June  
weather;  
Let's dream through the summer to fall of the year;  
Let's “tromp” through the fields till our hearts grow  
together;  
Let's hunt for each other below the veneer.

O, perfect in speech of the deep-lying passions!  
O, deft with that touch that is vital and warm!

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With a wit that is like a Damascus blade flashing,  
A heart where all childhood is housed from the  
storm!

I'm sent by the Heart of the People, whose portals  
Are open to thee. I dip in the wine  
My laurel, and crown thee among the immortals.  
Thy brows are right worthy; the laurel is thine.



## FAITH AND DOUBT

Faith and doubt—the two great millstones  
Where the races have been ground  
Since time began.  
Faith the upper, doubt the lower—  
And between them, round and round,  
The heart of Man.

TO GEORGE FOX COOK

(On the death of his son)

My spirit give I unto thee,  
In double portion, O, my Friend!  
And when the flames shall drink the sea,  
And God shall call time at an end,  
My spirit still shall be with thee,  
In double portion, O, my Friend!

## LOVERS' LANE

O, Lovers' Lane, with haunting charm,  
Where spring and summer wed;  
Who comes here once will come again,  
Where happy hours are sped.

What shadowy forms! what hint of wings!  
What silvery laughter there!  
What beckoning hands like fairy wands!  
What fragrance in the air!

The wood thrush pours his vesper song  
To ears that love attunes;  
Their burning hearts are drunk with joy;  
The earth beneath them swoons.

At night the star-beams tangle there  
In happy drops of dew;  
The moon in benediction beams  
To make their vows more true.

Long years in joy I walked the shades,  
Sweet shades of Lovers' Lane;  
But at the end I found a grave,  
And in my heart a pain.

## OLD CLEAR CREEK

Your lover, old Clear Creek, is here on your brink;—  
Your lovers, I should say; for blithe bobolink  
Is blowing his bubbles of jolliest mirth,  
While brown thrasher seals to your beauty and worth.  
Your lovers,—the stars and the big May moon,  
The mink and the muskrat, the otter and coon,  
The chub and the shiner, the flat punkin-seed,  
The water-snake wriggling through pickerel weed;  
The sweetflag, the pebbles, the crawfish, the bog,  
The tadpole, the killdeer, the toad and the frog,  
Are chumming with me, as I lie in the shade,  
Or sprawl on your margin and watch the parade  
Of Spring with her flowers, and all the gay throng  
That shower me here with their beauty and song.

## DESPAIR

Sweet night is a gift of gentleness,—  
A life-renewing spring.  
But this black webt entangling me  
Is a raven vast with dead'ning wing,  
And a croak like a troubled sea;  
An eye that pierces the gloom like the sting  
Of Nithhoggr, the tooth of death,  
That nicks the thread and stops the breath,—  
A dark and deadly thing.

Oh! what shall deliver my shrinking soul?  
Oh! what shall pierce the pall  
Of those horrible wings that more and more  
Shroud in, while my senses crawl?  
The black wings flap, as my lips implore;  
(They shed the wormwood and the gall)  
I cry, and the hollow echoes drown  
My cry, and the empty laugh of a clown  
Mocks back from a vacuous hall.

## BALLOONING SPIDERS

As spiders from their spinners throw  
The films on which they sail the sky,  
So from my deepest bosom I  
Must build up yonder shining bow—

The ladder upon which I rise  
From swale and swamp, from fog and reek  
To atmosphere of mountain peak,—  
From mountain peak to boundless skies.

God gives to each the latent force  
To move along the shining road,  
And learn to change the weary load  
For eagle wing and star-lit course.

## THE RAINBOW BRIDGE

I stand on the brink and gaze  
At the City in the Clouds ;  
In purple and golden haze  
I glimpse the shining crowds.

Between me and yon dome,  
The plunging rivers roar ;  
And yet, yon is my home,  
And this a foreign shore.

O, heart of me, catch the gay,  
Glad colors that there dispart,  
And build me a Rainbow Way  
To Asgard, O, my heart !

## TRUST

I listened to the flowers  
That to the zephyrs nod;  
Their sweet lips kept repeating:  
"We know there is a God."

I saw their rain-wet faces  
Turned mournfully above;  
But still they smiled and whispered:  
"We know that God is love."

I saw their withered petals  
By autumn breezes strown,  
And thought to hear their voices  
Complaining like my own.

But sweet reproof they gave me  
From lips low in the dust;  
For still they smiled, and whispered:  
"We know that God is just."



## BACK UNTO GOD

Earth has no useless blooms that grow  
    Upon her sod ;  
Their beauties all and perfumes flow  
    Back unto God.

Earth has no loves that die and go  
    Under the sod ;  
They keep their broken dreams and flow  
    Back unto God.

Earth has no graves that vainly roll  
    Clod unto clod ;  
Through them doth creep the weary soul  
    Back unto God.

## THE FOUNTAIN

A  
Drop  
At the top,  
A beautiful gem  
In the pearl diadem  
Of this nymph of the sea  
With her hair wild and free  
Streaming back through the mist  
In a spangled and multiform twist  
O'er the white robe of rainbow-lit spray  
That encircles in magical beauty always  
This dream-world of laughter and song.

At last in the peace of the marble-edged pool  
It dimples and dallies, deliciously cool,  
Where the sunbeams are drowned in the wave  
And the gold-fish and lilies in idleness lave,  
And the shadows dream all the day long.

A  
Drop  
At the top,  
That no higher can go  
For a strange undertow  
That sucks the drop back  
To be drowned in the black

Labyrinth of confusion and vortex of night;  
Hid from the manifold beauties of light;  
Lost to the life of this fount on the lea,  
To wake in the larger—the life of the sea.

This life is a flow  
With a strange undertow.  
O, the rainbow, the pearl,  
And the unending whirl  
Of laughter and tears  
That weave, through the years,  
The turmoil of the sea  
And the peace of the stars  
With the mountain rill's glee  
And the frenzy of wars!

Leaping from basin to pool, out of breath,  
To be sucked back at last into darkness and death.

But Death is not king:  
The chrysalid's wing  
The searcher may trace  
On his fine mummy-case,  
Is mortality's sign  
That immortal shall shine  
The soul that shall pierce here the secret divine.

So the spirit of man with its heavenly thrills  
That are breathed down upon it on star-hovered hills  
While leaping in cascades and mad cataracts,  
Though it reach the low valley and sink in the sod,  
Shall come forth again in the likeness of God.

## TORCH AND BURDEN

Here, take my torch, young man so fleet;  
I held it when you needed light;  
I cheered you on from height to height;  
Now comes your day, and comes my night:  
Here, take my torch, young man so fleet.

Here, take my burden, youth so strong.  
Once I could fly beneath its weight;  
I was the eagle's tireless mate;  
Now unto you I abdicate:  
Here, take my burden, youth so strong.

Here, take my torch, O maiden sweet!  
My torch I lit by morning star,  
My torch of love that beams afar  
Like Arthur's gemmed Excalibur.  
Here, take my torch, O maiden sweet.

Here, take my burden, maiden fair,  
And share it with yon youth so fleet,  
Who walks the earth on air-like feet;  
Ye twain shall conquer frost and heat!  
Here, take my burden, maiden fair.

Here, take my torch, ye lovers twain!  
But why should I obstruct the road,  
And vex you with my weary load?  
Nay, I will keep the pack and goad;  
But take my torch, ye lovers twain.

## QUATRAINS



## A STORM AT SEA

This is no ruthless, angry sea ;  
I see no sign of cruel wrath :  
Just monstrous power in rollicking glee ;  
Just God Almighty at his bath.

## THE VISION OF DANTE

The crystal sweets of many tears  
Sobbed through a heart by grief made pure ;  
As boulders ache a million years,  
Then break, and lo ! the Kohinoor.

## WIN YOUR SPURS

Win your own spurs, my lad.  
Don't work the political lever ;  
Don't lean on the purse of your dad,  
But rise by your own endeavor.

## AUTUMN LEAVES

Ye are prophets of death, of the grave and its cold ;  
But ye whisper of peaceful sleep under the mould,  
Of sorrows forgotten in heaven's warm fold,  
And ye shower down on me God's love with your gold.

## AMRITA

Where laughter rollicks in the vat,  
Men drink, and call the draught divine;  
But true Amrita only flows  
Where Sorrow's feet compel the wine.

## .BEHOLD, I WILL DELIVER THEE

The jubilee! the jubilee!  
The tides have told it to the sea;  
It sweeps the wood from tree to tree;  
The angels cymbal it to me:—  
Behold, I will deliver thee!

## THE HEART AND THE BRAIN

The poet's heart, like ocean's heaving surge,  
Beats on the brain with its tumultuous roar;  
The poet's brain, like ocean's rocky verge,  
Beats back the heart in music evermore.

## THE PRICE

If you will sell me one small thing;—  
If you would buy both place and pelf,  
And hear your name to welkin ring,  
Why, walk up quick! the price is—self.



## FATE

The blind fates spin, year out year in;  
And yet, 'tis purpose clips the cord:  
For he who stands and guides those hands,  
Within the shadow, is the Lord.



JUVENILE



## THE FAIRY'S KISS

Down in a little woodsey dell,  
Where echoes romp and the brownies dwell,  
A fairy snuggled in the cup  
Of a morning-glory tilted up.  
Her voice was low, and her laugh was cute  
As the tinkling notes of the Elfland lute  
She held in her hand, and which, I thought,  
Was a moonbeam she had somehow caught.  
She dangled her feet in pink shell shoes,  
And sang as soft as the falling dews.  
She sang the songs they sang that morn  
The Prince of Fairyland was born:  
The songs of love, which, I suppose,  
Paint those pink tints on the opening rose.

With tousled hair and grimy face,  
There happened along this enchanted place  
A boy who would scrap like a grumpy bear,  
Whenever they washed him or combed his hair.  
The fairy frowned,—and the air grew still;  
And the urchin felt a shuddery thrill  
Go shivering through the startled leaves,  
While queer little sounds his ear perceives.  
The fairy had tilted her megaphone,  
(I wish I could mimic that mellow tone,)

And called as only a fairy can:—

“Go wash your face, my little man!

Your hands are black, and your hair— Oh law!

You’re the dirtiest boy I ever saw.”

The lad looked down as soon as he heard,

And saw right there,—you take my word,

In a purple morning-glory curled,

The prettiest fairy in all this world.

If she’d been a boy, just like enough

He’d a pitched right in for a fisticuff;

But who could fuss with a charming fay

Like a dew-pearl hung on a harebell spray?

He mumbled over some words to himself,

But she marked them down, the sly little elf;

Then waved her wand, and—what do you s’pose?

A big thorn grew on the end of his nose!

And after that, if he would pout

When they combed the snarly tangles out,

Or brushed his teeth, or washed his face,

When he went to school or any place,

Out would bristle another spur,

Till his nose looked just like a chestnut burr.

One afternoon he stooped o’er a brook,

And gazed at his face. My! what a look!

Then he snatched up a stone and slammed in where

His picture darkened the water there;

Then he dipped some up in his grimy hand,

And tried to wash the filth off, and,

He noticed, as soon as he begun,

The thorns went dropping, one by one.

But just the same, if he were slack  
In making his toilet, the thorns came back;  
Until at last he came to be  
The sweetest, rosiest lad you'd see  
In going from here to Washington Square,  
Or London Town, or anywhere.

And then he wanted to see that fay  
I told you about the other day.  
So down he went, and peered about  
Among the ferns, and in and out,  
And there she sat all snug in the moss  
In a gown of mole fur soft as floss,  
And a mobcap made of a mouse's ear:  
She was dressed, you see, for the time of year;  
But she didn't care for ice and snows,  
And breath of North wind, goodness knows!  
And O she laughed, and O she clapped  
Her tiny hands till the cobweb snapped  
That held her muff, for very joy  
To see such a handsome, dimpled boy.  
And then she said— "Come taste the bliss  
Of a fairy's love and a fairy's kiss."

What happened then I never could tell;  
But the sun burst forth and a magic spell  
Was on the woods and in the sky.  
Wherever I turned my wondering eye  
The trees all danced, and the air had wings,  
And I saw and heard the happiest things!  
I must have dreamed; for a castle fair

Reared its battlements in the air.  
I felt so sure it was all a dream,  
That I pinched myself till I had to scream;  
For there, in an arch of orange bloom,  
The boy and the fairy were bride and groom;  
And a voice was saying, as sweet as life:—  
“I pronounce you Man and Wife,”  
And the fairies all danced, and the nymphs were gay,  
And an elfin band began to play.  
Oh, what joy! and Oh, what fun!  
I shouted out loud, just as you'd have done;  
For thrills of joy in ripples ran—  
The happiest day since time began.

And now every urchin about that place  
Is rubbing and scrubbing his rosy face,  
And looking about, since that occurred,  
Hunting for fairies, as I have heard.



## SANTA CLAUS

“My eyes, what a lark!” old Santa Claus said,  
As he rolled like a butter-ball into his sled,  
And pulled a big bear skin up close to his chin,  
Working every-which-way to get it tucked in.  
Then he leaned back contented and puffed his old pipe,  
While his jolly face shone like a pippin dead ripe,  
And his beard floated back like the smoke from a train,  
Or a long line of snow-banks piled up in a lane.

He stops at some cottage with presents galore,  
Or with a grand flourish pulls up at the door  
Of Paddy Flynn’s shanty, where children are thick  
As bees in a bee-hive, or rats in a rick.

Now, while we’ve been talking just this little while,  
His reindeer have jingled him full twenty mile,  
And then, with a twinkle of silvery hoof,  
In a forty-foot leap, land him plump on the roof  
Of Squire Brown’s mansion, where cute little Ted,  
Wide awake as a kitten, is humped up in bed,  
There watching and waiting, all eye and all ear,  
For the tinkle of bells or the snort of a deer;  
Expecting old Santa, in spite of all locks,  
To leap into view like a jack-in-the-box.

But he and the Sandman are best of old friends,  
So when he starts off on a journey, he sends  
The Sandman along, just a little ahead,  
To visit each dwelling and each little bed,  
And scatter dream-dust from the skirts of the skies  
On all of the winkers of wide-open eyes.  
Sometimes a wise youngster will rub his lids hard,  
And stiffen his back like a soldier on guard,  
And be wide awake when the reindeer and sleigh  
Come lickety-brindle along the back way.  
But Santa can see you right through a stone wall;  
There's no use in trying to fool him at all.  
Whenever you sit up and peep through a crack  
To catch the old fellow unloading his pack,  
Or slip down the stairway to peek in and see  
Who's hanging the presents and things on the tree,  
He turns into Father or Mother so quick  
That no one has ever suspected the trick.  
So, when a boy thinks he sees Father about  
The Christmas tree, weaving the things in and out,  
It's merely old Santa in one of his shapes  
To fool and to puzzle the young jackanapes.  
Then, presto! he wriggles back into his skin,  
And gallops away with a squint and a grin.

So over the world he goes, jingling along  
With brownies and brownies,—my O, what a throng!  
He dives down a chimney, or up through the floor,  
While in at odd corners the brownies all pour.  
And when all is ready the brownies advance,  
And circle the tree in a gay little dance;

Then lay all the presents just where they belong,  
And vanish while singing a jubilant song.

Then—when they are gone—and the house is all still,  
Except when the frost cracks a rafter or sill,  
Old Santa Claus kisses each sweet little face;  
He smooths out the pillows and straightens the lace;  
Then turns to the presents and waves both his hands,  
Or raises an eyebrow—and there the tree stands.

## MY FIRST LOVE

I was just eleven years,  
And Emma, she was ten ;  
We went to same old country school,  
And fell in love, and then,

One happy day she stood by me,  
And watched me draw a pig,  
And told me that she'd marry me  
Whenever we got big.

We traded photographs that day,—  
Hers done in keel, I think,  
While mine, upon a match-box lid,  
Was scrawled in crimson ink.

And then a dozen times a day,  
In inch-square envelopes,  
We told our loves, and vowed anew,  
On wraps for patent soaps.

But in the bright and happy spring,  
When lovers' hearts are gay,  
Her mother burned my letters up,  
And made me stay away.

Yet still she sits beside me here,  
Glad of that old vow;  
And Emma, she is fifty-nine,  
And I am sixty now.

## WHO STOLE THE CHICKEN?

O, I stood by de chicken-coop, an' a-what did I see?

(O de moonlight come by an' by.)

De debil hisself a-comin' atter me.

(O de moonlight come by an' by.)

O, I turn right roun', an' I kneel down to pray,

(O de moonlight come by an' by.)

An' de debil tuck a chicken, an' he toted it away.

(O de moonlight come by an' by.)

An' I tol' ol' Massa, an' a-what did he say?

(O de moonlight come by an' by.)

"I spect dat chicken is a-fattin' you today."

(O de moonlight come by an' by.)

## A CHARM FOR WARTS

Pick a peck of pollywogs  
From a fen of freckled frogs;  
Catch a cat that clawed a coon  
In the darkest of the moon;  
Take a turgid, tumid toad,  
Reeking in the ruddy road.

Feed the cat

Till he's fat

With the broth of this and that;

Take the fur,

And the purr,

And the road,

And the toad,

And the coon,

And the moon,

And stir them with the Great Horn Spoon.

Smear this on the wicked wart,

While the snorers snooze and snort.

Peel it, core it,

Slice in four it;

Say some incantations o'er it.

This will cure

Sartin sure.





## FREE VERSE



# WAR

## A POEM IN THREE PARTS

### I

#### THE GOD OF WAR SPEAKS

Yes! I set them at it.  
Hey! my beauties, my hounds of hell!  
Your fangs drip blood; your bite drives mad.  
Did ever Nimrod hunt with such a pack?  
I look them over: Despair, Destruction, Fire, Curse,  
Famine, Rags, Fury, Grief,  
Torment, Disease, Hate, Anguish, Frenzy, Pain, Sor-  
row, Woe, Agony, Distress,  
Torture, Plague, Thirst, Starvation, Devastation,  
Nightmare, and Death!  
Where these hell-hounds hunt, hell's curses follow like  
cancer and leprosy; there in their trail are sown the  
crops of dragon's teeth.  
Aha! your yelps are music to my ear.  
You thrive in wake of war.  
You fatten on broken bodies and broken hearts.  
You hold high carnival where the wounded groan.  
You kennel where the roof-tree is rent and blasted.  
Run riot, my beauties, bellowing the blight of hell.  
Tear and rend;

Bay glad accompaniment to roaring cannon.  
Heigh ho! This is hell's day of triumph.

## II

## TOMMY ATKINS

A bullet-torn rag of a man,  
Consumed with loneliness, and pain, and thirst,  
I lie here on the battle-field,  
Deserted by all save the fiends of thirst and pain and  
    despair,  
And this horror of darkness.  
Deserted by all?  
No!  
Over there is a wounded foeman.  
Here we lie, he and I, stabbed by the staring eyes of the  
    dead.  
Here we drag out the time,  
Sensing all the horrors that exult in the wake of this  
    unholy war;  
Sensing what it is to be crucified on the cross of Royal  
    ambition.  
Is it nothing to kings and emperors, nothing to the  
    wide world, nothing to God,  
That I, that *we*,  
My dying foeman and I,  
Should be writhing here in all the rounds of torture?  
Does our innocent suffering weigh nothing in the eternal  
    balances?

Why are there doctors, nurses, Red Cross, sanitation,  
Y. M. C. A., K. C., hospital, dispensatory,  
priest?

Why all the Herculean toil, world round, spent for  
sheltering and feeding Man?

Why all the wealth and time spent in smoothing out his  
path?

Why all the busy fingers of Art striving to make the  
world attractive to his eye?

Why the eternal appeal of the theatre, picture show, art  
gallery, to delight the soul of Man, in the unending  
panorama of the Life That Now Is?

Why the churches that dot the world?

B E C A U S E !!!!!!!!!!!!!

The whole of life,

The whole of eternity,

Is for the finding of "the joy of the Lord," and ap-  
propriating it to the soul of Man!

It is for finding a cure for selfishness,

That mother of all greed, of vice, of sin, of war;

That spiritual incest, by which the halls of hell are  
peopled.

It is for bringing Man into his inheritance of peace  
and joy.

And yet—O Lord God of Hosts, hear me ere I die!

What a futile fumble at the puzzle is this unholy war!

Yes, here I lie, a bullet-torn rag of a man,

While yonder are emperor, king, statesman, and my  
own neighbor at home,

All safe under their own roofs,

Snug in bed with their wives,  
And with their babies near.

Answer me, ye roots of all reasoning!—  
When shall king and kaiser,  
When shall selfishness,  
Desist from nailing men unto the cross,  
While they go by wagging their heads?

All the millions who have been pinioned to the cross by  
the bloody hand of war,—  
All the heart-broken mothers, and widows, and maidens,  
Unite with me in demanding a reason why.

Every molecule in the huge earth shuddered with the  
awfulness of that cry that went appealing from  
that cross on Calvary—"I thirst!"

So do I!

And is my thirst of no moment?

I, too, cry it from the cross where I am nailed—"I  
thirst!"

And over and over, my wounded foeman yonder is  
crying—

"Mich dürstet!"

Gird up thy loins, thou depth of all reasoning, and  
answer me like a god; for I will demand of thee!

Who is my neighbor?

In the subliminal deeps of the soul,

There is no near nor far,

And— My neighbor is he who needs me most.

I feel it welling up from geyser deeps:

My neighbor is yon wounded foeman,  
Whose tongue is a rope of thirst,  
Whose parched throat is a caldron of thirst,  
Whose life is broken on the wheel of war, and  
Dumped here on the scrap-heap.  
If I can drag my shattered body to where he lies,  
And pour between his lips the few scant drops from  
    my canteen,  
I feel that I would like to do it for my neighbor's sake.

Yes, my neighbor, had I my life back,  
I would give it again, if by that sacrifice  
I could restore you whole and happy  
To that sweet maiden, whose picture you are devouring  
    there with dying eyes.  
O, neighbor mine,  
It was your bullet pierced my breast,  
And mine that gored your body there!  
We forgive!

But why?—*Why?*—Why was it done?  
Yesterday I could have told you why.  
When I shot you, I could have told you why.  
Every soldier in all these armies can rattle off the  
    reasons why.  
But on the dark and ghastly brink of the gaping grave,  
How those paltry, spurious reasons fade away!  
Now that I am dying, it all seems so foolish, so inane,  
So ghastly and so silly!  
So criminal!  
So idiotic!



Who are we, anyhow, speaking by accident—  
English, German, Russ, French?

Who are you, anyhow, wearing by accident, crown of  
King, Emperor, Kaiser, Czar?

How came it, anyhow, that we are in opposing armies,  
Lunging at each other's throats?

How came it that we are not marching elbow to elbow,  
Or, better,

*Working* and *achieving* elbow to elbow, on farm, in  
shop, on throne,

Neighboring elbow to elbow?

Climbing heavenward elbow to elbow?

Yonder, where we shall meet again so soon,  
My wounded foeman and I,—nay my wounded neigh-  
bor and I,

We shall find neither Greek nor Jew, Russ nor German,  
French nor English.

Foeman? Never! Not foemen, we,  
Just neighbors hunting for the same Tree of Life;  
Just neighbors smitten with some unaccountable confu-  
sion of tongues;

Some accursed crookedness of thought or heart.

Neighbors?

Nay, *Brothers!*

Twine your hand in mine, my Brother,  
And let us die as we should have lived—  
Just Brothers.



## III

## CHRIST SPEAKS

O, that thou hadst known, even thou,  
The things that belong to thy peace,  
Thou that callest thyself Kaiser!  
But now are they hid from thine eyes.

I stretch my bleeding hands  
Over these dead bodies in No Man's Land.  
Peace I leave with you;  
My peace give I unto you.  
Not as the world giveth, give I unto you.

## ENCELADUS

My heart is hot within me!  
Heavy on my breast  
Lies Pelion on Ossa!  
Who buried me here?  
Not Zeus.  
The greed of the world,  
The wrongs of the world,  
These are what weigh down my heart.  
What I saw in the Ghetto,  
What I saw in the police courts,  
What I saw in the packinghouses,  
What I heard in the counsels of capital,  
What I heard in the lobby of Congress,  
What suffering I saw among the poor,—  
These kindle this volcano in my heart.

Zeus thinks he buried me here!  
Vulcan thinks he kindled this fire!  
Not so.  
The wrath of all wronged hearts,  
'Tis this that feeds this white-hot furnace.

Let me tell you,  
Ye dumb years of the past;

Let me tell you,  
Ye silent years to come ;  
Let me tell you, ye patient beasts of burden—  
I mean you, ye hungry and cold,  
Ye who are tramping toil's treadmill ;  
Let me tell you,  
Ye stars of the Milky Way ;  
Let me tell you,  
Ye daughters of the horse-leech,  
That suck the blood of Labor ;—  
I mean you,  
Ye purloiners of crusts from the mouth of hunger !  
I mean you,  
Ye deft stealers,  
Who steal according to law !  
Let me tell you :  
    The wrath of Achilles was terrible,  
    But the wrath of this mighty heart of Labor  
    Will consume you some awful day !  
    Zeus will be cremated here some day !  
    Vulcan will writhe here some day !  
Let me tell you— !  
    The burning of Rome was horrible !  
    But this furnace  
    That has smouldered through countless centuries  
    In the heart of Labor,  
    This furnace, heated seven times hotter,  
    Is more terrible than hell !  
Let me tell you,  
Ye pharisees, hypocrites, profiteers,

Let me tell you:  
THE ONLY SALVATION FOR THE WORLD  
IS IN THE FORGETTING OF SELF.

The pauper must not envy the millionaire!  
The millionaire must not despise the pauper!  
The banker must love the beggar;  
The beggar must love the banker!

What has Dives taken with him  
Beyond the grave?  
Just Dives himself,—that's all;  
He can point to no possessions,  
No bank account,  
To inflate his personal importance.  
He can point to no fawning followers  
To prove his station;  
He can just point to Dives,—that's all.  
He stands or falls by what Dives *is*.  
He can point to no rags on Lazarus  
To prove him a beggar;  
He can point to no sores;  
He can find no marks of the beggar;  
He can behold just Lazarus,  
And what Lazarus *is*.

O, Capital, reach me your hand!  
O, Labor, reach me your hand!  
Ye twain are one flesh,  
And verily,  
What God hath joined let no man put asunder.

## AMPHION

The mockingbird in yonder mimosa  
Is singing the songs the heart of love has sung  
Since first,  
In dream-lit gardens of Paradise,  
The dew-drops clung to the lips of lilies.  
All day long he is singing:—and all night long:—  
“Sunshine, starshine,  
Sanctify the straws my Love is gleaning  
To thatch her nest.  
Wave-sparkle, dew-sparkle, light-sparkle, life-sparkle,  
Weave your sparkles among these twigs  
To light the spark in the throats  
That shall wing forth  
From this nest.  
Life, life, life, life,  
Permeate the thatching here!  
Pervade the heart of my Love!  
For, except harmonies build this house,  
They labor in vain that build it.”

All the night long he sings in the mimosa,  
All the day long in the magnolia,  
While the walls of this little Thebes rise  
At the bidding of this Amphion.

All the night long he sings,  
And under the heart of a woman,  
Who leans listening from her casement,  
This harp of Amphion,  
Struck by the finger of God,  
Is building a man.

## I HOLD THE REINS

Why do you think me crazy,  
Ye staid and sanctified souls,  
Because I cavort in the show-ring?  
Why do you think me running off with the bits in my  
teeth,  
Because I ramp, rough-shod, over the hills,  
In all sorts of criss-cross, hit-and-miss ways—  
With little attention to trails?  
Why do you stare because I stampede through canyons,  
Aroyas,  
Stopping not for contravening rivers,—  
Plunging in, dress suit and all?

That's my style!

Why do you hold your breath in astonishment,  
Because I plunge,  
Like an eagle,  
Ten thousand feet down, chariot and all?

I like it that way!

Slambang we go,  
Through Vulcan's smithy,  
Upsetting the ladles of melted t'ifa,

Laughing in glee,  
At our own high jinks,  
And don't give a damn!  
    Never you doubt, though,  
    When my hub smashes into the wheels of Mesala's  
        chariot,  
    But what it was planned.  
    Never you doubt,  
    When my steeds send the chariot that holds the sun,  
    Bowling into the ocean,—Never you doubt,—that  
I hold the reins!



## TOMMY ROT!

A weaver sits at Court.  
He has  
A  
Wonderful loom,  
With fruit of "pure color."

None but the initiated may see the web,  
He says.  
He calls it "Free Verse,"  
"The New Beauty."

The King,  
The Queen,  
The maids of honor,  
Stand about and praise volubly,  
Lest they be classed with the "uninitiated."

They praise :  
"The 'New Beauty' !  
Behold !  
Old things are passed away,  
And  
All things are become new !"

The courtiers tumble over themselves  
To get to it.

"Wonderful!"

"Wonderful!"

"Wonderful!"

Huh!

I can't see the web.

There isn't any;

But there *is* a mighty rattling of the loom!

"What fools these mortals be!"

Tommy rot!

I whip out my rapier and slash the magic web:

The gig's up.

THE END





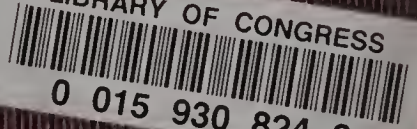








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